

POEMS OF TO-DAY  
Third Series

# THE ENGLISH ASSOCIATION

(FOUNDED 1906)

---

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# POEMS OF TO-DAY

## THIRD SERIES

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BY

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## PREFATORY NOTE

IN this anthology the intention which prompted the First and Second Series of *Poems of To-day* is continued. Its aim is to bring together a selection of contemporary poetry representative of a span of years, and at the same time sufficiently in accordance with tradition to avoid excursions into the fields of ultra-modernism.

Beginning where the Second Series concluded, the following collection consists of poems published since 1922 down to the present day. The period has been characterized by a large body of verse in which the traditional modes of the poetic art have been challenged or disregarded. No attempt has been made to represent the more extreme forms of this movement. On the other hand the book will be found to include a number of poems that are truly typical of the modern school, while yet conforming to certain accepted canons of style. The omission of the more extravagant manifestations of modern poetry implies no judgment on it, but is dictated by the deliberate intention to preserve continuity with the character of the preceding books. A preference for traditional technique is perhaps justified by the tendency, already apparent among poets, to return to older forms and patterns.

Rather more verse of a light quality is included than before, as an antidote to that poetry of disillusionment which is a necessary feature of the anthology if

## PREFATORY NOTE

it is to be really representative of its period. Some-  
times also of which the chief distinction is its musical  
quality has been admitted as a relief from the dissonance  
so often audible in the poetry of social and intellectual  
revolt.

Although no effort has been spared to make the  
selection fully representative it is regretted that it has  
not been possible to obtain permission to include  
examples of the work of some poets whose names are  
well known.

*January 1938*

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- DAVIES, WILLIAM HENRY (1870). Born at Newport, Monmouthshire. Was apprenticed to a picture-frame maker, and became a tramp in America. Returned to England and led a penurious life in London lodging-houses and as a pedlar in the country. His published works include—*The Autobiography of a Super-Tramp*; *A Poet's Pilgrimage*; *Collected Poems*; *Forty New Poems*; *Song of Life*; *Secrets*; *The Song of Love*, and *My Birds*.
- DAY LEWIS, CECIL (1904). Born in Ballintubber, Queen's Co., Ireland. Educated at Sherborne School, and Wadham College, Oxford. Master at Cheltenham College Junior School. His published works include—*Country Comets*; *Transitional Poem*; *From Feathers to Iron*; *The Magnetic Mountain*; *A Hope for Poetry*; *A Time to Dance*, and *Starting Point*. Has contributed to many Reviews.
- DE LA MARE, WALTER JOHN (1873). Born in Kent. Educated at St. Paul's Cathedral Choir School, London. F.R.S.L.; Hon. Litt.D. (Cambridge). Spent eighteen years in commercial life before devoting his time to literature. Awarded a Civil List pension for the distinction of his literary work. His first volume of verse, *Songs of Childhood*, was published under the pseudonym Walter Ramal. His published works include—*Poems*, *The Return*; *The Listeners*; *Peacock Pie*; *Memoirs of a Midget*; *Come Hither* (an anthology); *Stuff and Nonsense*; *The Fleeting and Other Poems*; *Themselves when Young*; *Collected Poems* 1929 and 1934, and *The Wind Blows Over*.

## BIOGRAPHICAL NOTES

- DRINKWATER, JOHN (1882-1937). Educated at Oxford High School, was for a time in various Assurance offices. He was co-founder of The Pilgrim Players, which developed into the Birmingham Repertory Theatre Company. His best-known plays, *Abraham Lincoln* and *Oliver Cromwell*, were produced in London. His published works include—*Olton Pools*; *Seeds of Time*; *Collected Poems*; *Persephone*; *Inheritance*; *Summer Harvest*; *Shakespeare*, and *A Pageant of England's Life*.
- DYMENT, CLIFFORD (1914). Born at Alfreton, Derbyshire. Educated at Loughborough Grammar School, Leicestershire. Poet, short-storywriter, book reviewer, and film critic. Author of two volumes of poems: *First Day*, and *Straight or Curly?*
- EBERHART, RICHARD (1904). Born in Austin, Minnesota. Educated at Dartmouth College, New Hampshire, and St. John's College, Cambridge. Tutor in the household of King Prajadhipok of Siam; Assistant Master in the English Department of St. Mark's School, Southborough, Massachusetts. His poems are included in *Cambridge Poetry*, 1929; *New Signatures*; *The Faber Book of Modern Verse*, and in various periodicals. His published works include—*A Bravery of Earth*.
- FLOWER, ROBIN (1881). Born at Meanwood, Yorkshire. Educated at Leeds Grammar School, and Pembroke College, Oxford. After leaving Oxford joined the staff of the British Museum, where he is now Deputy Keeper of the Manuscripts. His published works include—*Etre*; *Hymenaea*; and a series of privately printed brochures; *Thanksgiving*; *The Leelong Flower*; *The Great Basket*; *Monkey Music*, and *The Pilgrims' Way*. A volume of translations from the Irish, *Love's Bitter Sweet*, was printed at the Cuala Press in 1925. A collected edition, *Poems and Translations*, was published in 1931.
- FREEMAN, JOHN (1880-1929). Born in London. Awarded the Hawthornden Prize, 1920. Chief Executive Officer in the Department of National Health Insurance. His published works include—*Memories of Childhood and Other Poems*; *Lyrical and Narrative Poems*; *Prince Absalom*; *Solomon and Balkis*; *Collected Poems*, and *Last Poems*.
- GAWSWORTH, JOHN (T. I. Fytton Armstrong) (1912). Born in Kensington. Educated at Merchant Taylors' School. Freeman of the City of London. Founded The Twyn Barlwm Press. His published works include—*Known Signatures*; *Ten Contemporaries*, and *Edwardian Poetry*. Editor of *Full Score*; *The Poets of Eton*; *The Poets of Harrow*; *The Poets of Merchant Taylors'*, and biennially, *Neo-Georgian Poetry*, a miscellany of contemporary verse.

## BIOGRAPHICAL NOTES

- GIBSON, WILFRID WILSON (1878). Born in Northumberland. His published works include—*Daily Bread*; *Fires*; *Thoroughfares*; *Battle*; *Friends*; *Livelihood*; *Dramatic Reverses*; *When*; *Home*, *I heard a Sailor*; *Collected Poems*; *The Golden Room*; *Island Poems*, and *Fuel*.
- GORELL, LORD (1884). O.B.E., 1918, C.B.E., 1919. Educated at Harrow, and Balliol College, Oxford. Barrister; President of Royal Society of Teachers, 1929; Chairman of the Society of Authors; Partner in John Murray (publisher); Chairman of Royal Aero Club; Editor of the *Cornhill Magazine*. His published works include—*Love Triumphant and Other Poems*; *Pilgrimage*; *Many Mansions*; *Although*; *Unheard Melodies*, and *Poems*, 1904–1936.
- GRAVES, C. L. (1856). Educated at Marlborough, and Christ Church, Oxford. Assistant Editor of *The Spectator*; member of the *Punch* Staff and Assistant Editor. His published works include—*Horace Odes, Book V*, English Versions, with Rudyard Kipling; *Mr. Punch's History of the Great War*; and numerous other volumes.
- GROOM, IDA SUTHERLAND. Born in London. Educated privately, at the City of London College, and in France. Her published works include—*Partialities* (a series of Sonnets). Contributor to *English*, *The Poetry Review*, and other periodicals, *A Reciter's Repertory*, and other anthologies.
- HARDY, THOMAS (1840–1929). O.M., 1910. Born in Dorset. Architect, poet, and novelist. His novels include—*Far from the Madding Crowd*; *The Return of the Native*; *The Mayor of Casterbridge*; *Tess of the D'Urbervilles*; *Jude the Obscure*; and among his volumes of poems are—*Wessex Poems*; *Time's Laughing-Stocks*; *Satires of Circumstance*; *Moments of Vision*; *Collected Poems*; *Winter Words*, and a play, *The Dynasts*.
- HARTNOLL, PHYLLIS (1906). Educated at St. Hugh's College, Oxford (Scholar). Gained Newdigate Prize, 1929, for *The Sands of Egypt*. Licenciée-ès-Lettres. Her published works include—*Twenty Poems*, and *The Dancer and Other Poems*.
- HASSALL, CHRISTOPHER VERNON (1912). Educated at St. Michael's College, Tenbury, Brighton College, and Wadham College, Oxford. Member of the O.U.D.S.: played Romeo. Toured Egypt and Australia in modern comedy. Played in a season at the Old Vic. His published works include—*Poems of Two Years*; *Devil's Dyke, with Compliment and Satire*, and *Christ's Cornet* (a poetic drama).
- HERBERT, ALAN PATRICK (1890). Educated at Winchester (Exhibitioner) and New College, Oxford (Exhibitioner). Barrister; M.P. for Oxford University; member of the Staff

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of *Punch*. Introduced The Matrimonial Causes Bill, 1937. His published works include—*The Bomber Gipsy*; *The Secret Battle*; *The House-by-the-River*; *Light Articles Only*; *The Wherefore and the Why*; *Tinker, Tailor*; *The Man about Town*; *The Old Flame*; *The Blue Peter*; *Laughing Ann*; *She Shanties*; *Riverside Nights*; *Plain Jane*; *Misleading Cases*; *The Trials of Topsy*; *Topsy, M.P.*; *Honeybubble & Co.*; *La Vie Parisienne*; *The Water Gipsies*; *More Misleading Cases*, *Holy Deadlock*; *Ballads for Broadbrows*; *No Boats on the River*; and he has also written several Librettos.

HOPKINS, GERARD MANLEY (1844-1889). Born in Essex. Educated Highgate School, and Balliol College, Oxford. Entered the Roman Church, 1866; entered Jesuit Novitiate, 1868. Appointed to Chair of Greek, Royal University of Ireland, 1884. Publications—none during his lifetime. His poems, edited by Robert Bridges, were issued posthumously in 1919.

KNOX, EDMUND GEORGE VALPY (1881). Educated at Rugby, and Corpus Christi College, Oxford. Editor of *Punch*. Pen-name "Evoc." Served in the War. His published works include—*The Brazen Lyre*; *A Little Loot*; *Parodies Regained*; *These Liberties*; *Fiction as She is Wrote*; *An Hour from Victoria*; *Fancy Now*; *It Occurs to Me*; *Gorgeous Times*; *Quaint Specimens*; *Awful Occasions*; *Poems of Impudence*; *I'll tell the World*; *Wonderful Outings*; *Here's Misery*; *Blue Feathers*; *This Other Eden*; *Things that Annoy Me*; *Slight Irritations*, and *Folly Calling*. Has edited also an *Anthology of Humorous Verse*.

LAWRENCE, DAVID HERBERT (1885-1931). Born in Nottinghamshire, son of a coal miner. Educated at the Nottingham High School, and the Nottingham Day Training College. Became a teacher in an elementary school. Travelled widely. His published works include—*Love Poems and Others*; *Sons and Lovers*; *Amores*; *Poems*; *Look! We have Come Through*; *New Poems*; *Tortoises*; *Birds, Beasts, and Flowers*; *Pansies*; *Collected Poems*; *Last Poems*, and a play, *The Daughter-in-Law*.

LEHMANN, JOHN (1907). Born at Bourne End. Educated at Eton (King's Scholar), and Trinity College, Cambridge. Editor of *New Writing*, and joint-Editor of *The Year's Poetry*. His published works include—*A Garden Revisited* (poems); *The Noise of History* (poems in verse and prose), and *Prometheus and the Bolsheviks* (a travel book about the Caucasus).

LUCAS, FRANK LAURENCE (1894). Born at Hipperholme. Educated at Rugby, and Trinity College, Cambridge. Pitt

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- University Scholar, Porson Prizeman, Browne Medallist, Chancellor's Medallist; Fellow and Librarian of King's College, Cambridge. Served in 7th R. West Kent Regiment, and Intelligence Corps. Student of British School at Athens. Membre Correspondant Honoraire de L'Institut Littéraire et Artistique de France. His published works include—*Euripides and his Influence*; *Euripides' Medea* (translation); *Authors Dead and Living*; *Tragedy: The Complete Works of J. Webster*; *Eight Victorian Poets*; *Studies French and English*, *The River Flows*, *Cécile*, *The Wild Tulip* (novels); *Time and Memory*, *Marionettes*, *Ariadne* (poems); *Poems*, 1935; *From Olympus to the Styx* (with Prudence Lucas); *The Art of Dying* (with Francis Birrell); *Crabbe, Beddoes, Rossetti, and Tennyson* (anthologies); *Four Plays*, *The Decline and Fall of the Romantic Ideal*, and *The Golden Cockerel Greek Anthology*.
- MACNEICE, LOUIS (1907). Born in Belfast. Educated at Marlborough, and Merton College, Oxford. Lecturer in Classics (University of Birmingham), and Lecturer in Greek at Bedford College for Women (University of London). His published works include—*Poems*; *The Agamemnon of Aeschylus* (translated into verse); *Out of the Picture* (a play), and *Letters from Iceland* (with W. H. Auden).
- MADGE, CHARLES (1912). Born in Johannesburg. Educated at Winchester, and Magdalene College, Cambridge. Founder and organiser of "Mass-Observation" sociological group. His published works include—*The Disappearing Castle* (poems); *Mass-Observation* (with Tom Harrisson), and *May the Twelfth* (with Humphrey Jennings).
- MASEFIELD, JOHN (1878), O.M. Hon. D.Litt. (Oxon). Born at Ledbury, Herefordshire. Had an adventurous youth at sea. Lived in America, 1895–1897, and earned his living by doing odd jobs. Began his career as a critic and editor of poetry in 1903. Poet Laureate in succession to Robert Bridges. His published works include volumes of poetry, novels, plays, essays, and short stories. Among them are—*The Everlasting Mercy*; *Dauber*; *The Daffodil Fields*; *Sonnets*; *Reynard the Fox*; *Enslaved*; *Right Royal*; *King Cole*; *The Dream*; *Collected Poems*; *Sard Harker*; *Ootaa*; *Midsummer Night*; *The Bird of Dawning*; *End and Beginning*; *The Taking of the Gry*, and *The Square Peg*.
- MENAI, HUW. Born at Carnarvon. Was hawker, newspaper seller, messenger, and errand-boy. Went to South Wales, where he took up active Socialist propaganda, and contributed to *The Socialist Review*, and *The Social Democrat*. Became a weigher at the pit. Unemployed for some years. His

## BIOGRAPHICAL NOTES

- published works include—*From the Upcast Shaft*; *The Passing of Guto*, and *Back in the Return*.
- MEYERSTEIN, EDWARD HARRY WILLIAM (1889). Born at Hampstead. Educated at Harrow, and Magdalen College, Oxford. Assistant at the British Museum (Dept. of MSS.), served in the 3rd Bn. of the Royal Dublin Fusiliers. His published works include—*The Door*; *The Trireme*; *Wade's Boat*; *Voyage of Ass*; *The Monument*; *Grobo*; *The Pleasure Lover*; *The Boy*; *A Life of Thomas Chatterton*, and *Beauty and the Beast*.
- MONRO, HAROLD (1879-1932). Born in Brussels. Educated at Radley, and Caius College, Cambridge. Founder of the *Poetry Review*, and afterwards *Poetry and Drama*, in conjunction with the Poetry Society. Founder of the Poetry Bookshop in London. His published works include—*Judas*; *Before Dawn*; *Children of Love*; *Trees*; *Strange Meetings*; *Real Property*, and *The Earth for Sale*.
- MUIR, EDWIN (1887). Educated at Kirkwall Burgh School, Orkney. A clerk in various commercial and shipbuilding offices in Glasgow. His published works include—*The Marionette*; *The Three Brothers*; *First Poems*; *Chorus of the Newly Dead*; *Transition*; *Structure of the Novel*; *John Knox*; *Variations on a Time-Theme*; *Poor Tom*, and *Journeys and Places*.
- O'CASEY, SEAN (1884). Born in Dublin. Dramatist. His published works include—*The Plough and the Stars*; *The Silver Tassie*; *The Shadow of a Gunman*; *Juno and the Paycock*; *Within the Gates*, and *Windfalls*.
- OWEN, WILFRED (1893-1918). Killed in action in the War. A volume of his poems was published in 1920, with an introduction by Siegfried Sassoon.
- PALMER, HERBERT EDWARD (1880). Born at Market Rasen. Educated at Woodhouse Grove School, Birmingham University, and Bonn University. Schoolmaster, journalist, and lecturer. His published works include—*Two Fishers*; *Songs of Salvation, Sin, and Satire*; *The Judgement of François Villon*; *The Teaching of English*; *Cinder Thursday*; *Collected Poems*; *The Roving Angler*; *Summit and Chasm*; *The Mistletoe Child: autobiography of Childhood*, and *The Vampire*.
- PITTER, RUTH (1897). Born at Ilford, Essex. Educated at elementary and secondary schools. War Office, 1915-1917. Artist for Walberswick Peasant Pottery Co., in Walberswick and London, 1917-1930. Now in business in Chelsea in wholesale hand-painted goods. Her published works include—*First Poems*, 1920; *First and Second Poems*, 1927; *Persephone in Hades*; *A Mad Lady's Garland*, and *A Trophy of Arms*.



## BIOGRAPHICAL NOTES

- (awarded the Hawthornden Prize). Has contributed poems to *The New Age*.
- PROKOSCH, FREDERIC (1909). Born at Maddison, Wisconsin. Educated in America, Austria, England, France, and Germany, and Yale and Cambridge Universities. Teacher of English at Yale University. Has travelled most of his life. His published works include—*The Asiatics* (novel); *The Assassins* (poems), and *The Seven Who Fled* (novel). Has done considerable research work on Chaucerian MSS.
- PUDNEY, JOHN (1909). Born at Langley. Educated at Gresham's School, Holt. Contributor to *Time and Tide*, *Listener*, *New Statesman*, *London Mercury*, and *Life and Letters*. His published works include—*Spring Encounter*, and *Open the Sky*.
- READ, HERBERT (1893), D.S.O., M.C., Hon.D.Litt. Born at Kirbymoorside. Educated at Crossley School, Halifax, and Leeds University. Captain the Green Howards; Assistant Keeper Victoria and Albert Museum, 1922-1931; edited the *Burlington Magazine*. His published works include—*Naked Warriors*; *Reason and Romanticism*; *Collected Poems*; *English Prose Style*; *Phases of English Poetry*; *English Pottery*; *The Meaning of Art*; *Art Now*; *English Stained Glass*, and *Art and Society*.
- REEVES, JAMES (1909). Born at Harrow. Educated at Stowe School, and Jesus College, Cambridge. Teacher of English in Canterbury, London, and Chichester, successively. His published works include—*The Natural Need*. He was a collaborator in *Epilogue*.
- ROBERTS, MICHAEL (1902). Educated at Bournemouth School, King's College, London, and Trinity College, Cambridge. Physics Master at Royal Grammar School, Newcastle-upon-Tyne. His published works include—*These Our Matins*; *Poems*; *Critique of Poetry*, and *The Modern Mind*; edited *New Signatures*; *New Country*, and *Elizabethan Prose*. With E. R. Thomas has produced a volume of the "Classics of Scientific Method": *Newton and the Origin of Colours*.
- SACKVILLE-WEST, VICTORIA (The Hon. Mrs. Harold Nicolson) (1892). Born at Sevenoaks. Her published works include—*The Land* (awarded the Hawthornden Prize, 1927); *Poems of West and East*; *Orchard and Vineyard*; *King's Daughter* (poems); *The Edwardians*; *All Passion Spent*; *Family History*; *The Dark Island*, and *Pépita* (novels); *Collected Poems*, and *Some Flowers*.
- SASSOON, SIEGFRIED LORAINÉ (1886). Educated at Marlborough, and Clare College, Cambridge. Served in the War, 1914-1918. Was Literary Editor of the *Daily Herald* in 1919. His

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published works include—*The Old Huntsman*; *Counter Attack*; *War Poems*, *The Heart's Journey*; *Memoirs of a Fox-Hunting Man* (awarded the Hawthornden Prize, 1929); *Memoirs of an Infantry Officer*, and *Vigils*.

SCOTT, GEOFFREY (1884-1932). Educated at Rugby, and New College, Oxford. Winner of the Newdigate Prize, and the Chancellor's Essay Prize. His published works include—*The Architecture of Humanism*; *A Box of Paints*; *Portrait of Zélide*, and *Poems*.

SITWELL, EDITH (1887). Born at Scarborough. Educated privately. Edited with her brothers an Anthology of Modern Verse called *Wheels*, which was marked by violent revolt against the popular poetry of the time. Her published works include—*The Mother and Other Poems*; *Clowns' Houses*; *The Wooden Pegasus*; *Bucolic Comedies*; *The Sleeping Beauty*; *Troy Park*; *Rustic Elegies*; *Alexander Pope*; *Collected Poems*; *The Pleasures of Poetry*; *Bath*; *The English Eccentrics*; *Victoria of England*, and *Aspects of Modern Poetry*.

SITWELL, OSBERT (1892). Born in London. Educated at Eton. Grenadier Guards, 1913-1919. His published works include—*The Winstonburg Line*; *Three Satires*; *Argonaut and Juggernaut*; *Out of the Flame*; *Before the Bombardment* (a novel); *England Reclaimed*; *Collected Poems and Satires*, *Miracle on Sinai* (a novel); and *Winters of Content*. Has contributed to various periodicals.

SPENDER, STEPHEN (1909). Educated at University College School, Hampstead, and University College, Oxford. Has travelled widely in Europe—two years in Germany, after Oxford. His published works include—*Poems*; *The Destructive Element*; *Vienna*; *The Burning Cactus*; *Forward from Liberalism*, and *Death of a Judge*.

STRONG, LEONARD ALFRED GEORGE (1896). Born at Plympton. Educated at Brighton College, and Wadham College, Oxford. Assistant master at Summerfields Preparatory School, Oxford. His published works include—*Dublin Days*; *The Lowery Road*; *Difficult Love*, *Northern Light* (poems); *Denier Rides*; *The English Captain*; *The Garden*, *The Brothers*; *Sea-Wall*; *Corporal Tune* (fiction), and *Life in English Literature* (criticism).

STRUTHER, JAN (Mrs. Joyce Maxtone Graham) (1901). Educated privately. Has been contributing since 1917 poems, articles, and short stories to various periodicals, including *Punch*, *The Spectator*, *The New Statesman*, and *The London Mercury*. Her published works include—*Betsinda Dances and Other Poems*; *Sycamore Square and Other Verses*, and *The Modern Strumwel-peter*.

## BIOGRAPHICAL NOTES

- STUART, DOROTHY MARGARET. Educated privately. Assumed her mother's maiden name of Stuart. F.R.S.L., D.M.S. of *Punch*. Won for Great Britain the Silver Medal of the International Literary Contests of the Eighth Olympiad, 1924, by her cycle of *Sword Songs*. Writes historical or literary essays and monographs, with occasional incursions into fiction. Her published works include—*Beasts Royal and Other Poems*; *Historical Songs and Ballads*; *The Boy through the Ages*, Horace Walpole (English Men of Letters); *Men and Women of the Middle Ages*; *England's Story*; *Christina Rossetti* (English Men of Letters); *Men and Women of Plantagenet England*; *The Girl through the Ages*; *The Map* (with E. V. Davenport); *Molly Lepell*, Lady Harvey, and *An Interlude in Porcelain* (with E. V. Davenport).
- TESSIMOND, A. S. J. (1902). Born in Birkenhead. Educated at Birkenhead School, Charterhouse, and Liverpool University. Assistant Master, assistant bookseller, and copy-writer in London advertising agencies. His published works include—*The Walls of Glass*.
- THOMAS, DYLAN (1914). Born in Swansea. Little or no official education or employment. Contributor of poems, stories, and reviews to English, Welsh, and American periodicals. His published works include—18 *Poems*; and 25 *Poems*.
- TURNER, WALTER JAMES (1889). Born in China. Educated at Scotch College, Melbourne, and privately in Munich, and Vienna. R.G.A. Musical critic of the *New Statesman*; dramatic critic of the *London Mercury*; and Literary Editor of the *Daily Herald*. His published works include—*The Hunter and Other Poems*; *The Man who Ate the Popomack* (a play); *The Landscape of Cytherea*; *The Seven Days of the Sun*; *Orpheus, or the Music of the Future*; *Beethoven*; *New Poems*; *The Pursuit of Psyche*; *Wagner*; *Jack and Jill*; *Berlioz*, and *Mozart*.
- WALKER, JAMES (1911). Born in Ancoats, Manchester. Spent childhood and early 'teens on fairground, and at Festiniog County Intermediate School received "initiation" into poetry. Assistant Magistrates' Clerk at Blaenau Festiniog, North Wales. Has contributed to *Country Life*, and various periodicals.
- WARNER, REX (1905). Educated at St. George's School, Harpenden, and Wadham College, Oxford. Teacher in England and Egypt. Has contributed poems and articles concerned with literary criticism, education, and politics to various left wing periodicals. His published works include—*Poems*, and *The Wild Goose Chase* (a novel).

## BIOGRAPHICAL NOTES

- WELLESLEY, DOROTHY VIOLET (Lady Gerald Wellesley). Born at Croughton, Cheshire. Educated privately. Has contributed to numerous periodicals and anthologies. Her published works include—*Poems*; *Lost Lane*; *Genesis*; *Deserted House*; *Poems of Ten Years*; and *Life of Sir George Goldie* (a memoir). Editor of The Hogarth Living Poets Series, 1928–1932, and *The Annual*, 1929.
- WHISTLER, LAURENCE (1912). Educated at Stowe, and Balliol College, Oxford. Awarded the first of the King's Gold Medals for Poetry, 1934. His published works include—*Armed October and Other Poems*; *Four Walls*; *The Emperor Heart*, and *Vanbrugh, Architect and Dramatist* (a critical biography).
- WOLFE, HUMBERT (1885). C.B.E., C.B. Born in Milan. Educated at Bradford Grammar School, and Wadham College, Oxford. Principal Assistant Secretary, Ministry of Labour. His published works include—*London Sonnets*; *Kensington Gardens*; *Humoresque*; *Requiem*; *This Blind Rose*; *Dialogues and Monologues*; *Snow*; *Now a Stranger* (autobiography); *Reverie of a Policeman*; *Sonnets for Helen* (translated from Ronsard); *Portraits by Inference* (experiments in biography); *Cyrano de Bergerac*.
- YEATS, WILLIAM BUTLER (1865). Born in Dublin. Educated at Godolphin School, Hammersmith, and Erasmus Smith School, Dublin. Studied Art in Dublin. Helped to establish the Irish National Theatre in 1899, for which he wrote *Plays for an Irish Theatre*. Awarded the Nobel Prize for Literature, 1923. His published works include—*The Wanderings of Oisín*; *The Countess Kathleen*; *The Celtic Twilight* (essays); *Poems*; *Prose* (Collected Edition); *Later Poems*; *The Tower*; *The Winding Stair*; *Collected Poems*; *Collected Plays*; *Wheels and Butterflies*, and *Full Moon in March*.
- YOUNG, ANDREW (1885). Born in Elgin. Educated at the Royal High School, and the University of Edinburgh. His published works include—*The Cuckoo Clock*; *Thirty-one Poems*; *The Adversary* (a dramatic poem); *The Birdcage*; *The New Shepherd*; *Winter Harvest*, and *White Blackbird*.

# POEMS OF TO-DAY

## THIRD SERIES

LASCELLES ABERCROMBIE

1. *The Stream's Song*

MAKE way, make way,  
You thwarting stones ;  
Room for my play,  
Serious ones.

Do you not fear,  
O rocks and boulders,  
To feel my laughter  
On your grave shoulders ?

Do you not know  
My joy at length  
Will all wear out  
Your solemn strength ?

You will not for ever  
Cumber my play ;  
With joy and a song  
I clear my way.

Your faith of rock  
Shall yield to me,  
And be carried away  
By the song of my glee.

## LASCELLES ABERCROMBIE

Crumble, crumble,  
Voiceless things ;  
No faith can last  
That never sings.

For the last hour  
To joy belongs ;  
The steadfast perish,  
But not the songs.

Yet for a while  
Thwart me, O boulders ;  
I need for laughter  
Your serious shoulders.

And when my singing  
Has razed you quite,  
I shall have lost  
Half my delight.

## J. REDWOOD ANDERSON

2.

### *The Bell*

-STEADILY, steadily,  
across the rapid estuary  
the keen East wind blew from the sea :  
breath of the unapparent sun  
from regions of the New-Begun  
to the old lands of Dead-and-Done.

The church-clock in its ancient tower,  
cracked and wheezing, told the hour ;

## J. REDWOOD ANDERSON

then the bell began to ring  
for early weekday worshipping.

The ploughman, muffled half in dream,  
plodding slow behind his team,  
the cowman, shuffling to his stall,  
heard, but heeded not, the call ;  
only three old women heard  
—beat of bell and pipe of bird—  
three grey Marys crooked and bent  
who took their way at break of day  
to taste their dead Lord's sacrament.

I, too, heard it, where I listened  
by the hedge along the road,  
where the spangled cobweb glistened  
on the grasses at my feet,  
and the dew-pearl palely glowed  
like an infant newly christened ;  
heard the sharp insistent beat :  
Taste the Lord, and see how sweet !

Listening, heard, until the last  
throb of summons, fainting, passed  
—to a ghost of ringing thinned—  
down the deserts of the wind ;  
silence fell, save for the rush  
of windy voices saying Hush,  
and one last thin pipe of bird,  
and in that silence I heard well  
the beating of another bell :  
upon the wind, a changing note,  
faint, tumultuous, sharp, remote.

## J. REDWOOD ANDERSON

A sound of danger ringing free  
across the rapid estuary,  
a sudden hope, a sudden doubt ;  
a sound of challenge ringing wide  
to the drowsy country-side :  
the bell-buoy, as it swayed about  
on the river's breast, far out  
where the river meets the sea.

Faint, remote and turbulent,  
Summons to what Sacrament ?  
Invitation to assist  
at what wilder Eucharist,  
what primeval Table spread  
with elemental Wine and Bread ?  
Sanctus when what Bread and Wine  
flash to Substances divine ?  
Cup of Time and Host of Space,  
Hope of Glory, Means of Grace—  
what new God here showed his face ?

What strange Bridal ? Kiss sublime ?  
what Assumption of the Soul ?  
what Drowning in the Seas that roll  
from coast to utter coast of time ?

What Adventure of the Spirit,  
new Goal set and new Crown given ?  
what new earth, new sea, new heaven,  
for Life's Foundling to inherit ?  
Horizons where the sea and sky  
meet and merge in ecstasy ;



## J. REDWOOD ANDERSON

horizons where the great tides run  
blood-tinctured by the risen sun ;  
horizons where the soul is caught  
beyond all sense, beyond all thought,  
made one with the First Force of things  
past even love's imaginings.

The ploughman, muffled yet in dream  
plodding slow behind his team,  
the cowman, shuffling out of stall,  
heeded not, nor heard, the call.

Steadily, steadily,  
across the rapid estuary  
the keen East wind blows from the sea.

## W. H. AUDEN

### 3. *Fish in the Unruffled Lakes*

FISH in the unruffled lakes  
The swarming colours wear,  
Swans in the winter air  
A white perfection have,  
And the great lion walks  
Through his innocent grove ;  
Lion, fish, and swan  
Act, and are gone  
Upon Time's toppling wave.

We till shadowed days are done,  
We must weep and sing

W. H. AUDEN

Duty's conscious wrong,  
The Devil in the clock,  
The Goodness carefully worn  
For atonement or for luck ;  
We must lose our loves,  
On each beast and bird that moves  
Turn an envious look.

Sighs for folly said and done  
Twist our narrow days ;  
But I must bless, I must praise  
That you, my swan, who have  
All gifts that to the swan  
Impulsive Nature gave,  
The majesty and pride,  
Last night should add  
Your voluntary love.

4.

*Look, Stranger*

LOOK, stranger, at this island now  
The leaping light for your delight discovers,  
Stand stable here  
And silent be,  
That through the channels of the ear  
May wander like a river  
The swaying sound of the sea.

Here at the small field's ending pause  
Where the chalk wall falls to the foam, and its tall ledges  
Oppose the pluck  
And knock of the tide,

W. H. AUDEN

And the shingle scrambles after the suck-  
ing surf, and the gull lodges  
A moment on its sheer side.

Far off like floating seeds the ships  
Diverge on urgent voluntary errands ;  
And the full view  
Indeed may enter  
And move in memory as now these clouds do,  
That pass the harbour mirror  
And all the summer through the water saunter.

5.                    *O what is that Sound*

O WHAT is that sound which so thrills the ear  
Down in the valley drumming, drumming ?  
Only the scarlet soldiers, dear,  
The soldiers coming.

O what is that light I see flashing so clear  
Over the distance brightly, brightly ?  
Only the sun on their weapons, dear,  
As they step lightly.

O what are they doing with all that gear ;  
What are they doing this morning, this morning ?  
Only the usual manoeuvres, dear,  
Or perhaps a warning.

O why have they left the road down there ;  
Why are they suddenly wheeling, wheeling ?  
Perhaps a change in the orders, dear ;  
Why are you kneeling ?

W. H. AUDEN

O haven't they stopped for the doctor's care ;  
Haven't they reined their horses, their horses ?  
Why, they are none of them wounded, dear,  
None of these forces.

O is it the parson they want with white hair ;  
Is it the parson, is it, is it ?  
No, they are passing his gateway, dear,  
Without a visit.

O it must be the farmer who lives so near ;  
It must be the farmer so cunning, so cunning ?  
They have passed the farm already, dear,  
And now they are running.

O where are you going ? stay with me here !  
Were the vows you swore me deceiving, deceiving ?  
No, I promised to love you, dear,  
But I must be leaving.

O it's broken the lock and splintered the door,  
O it's the gate where they're turning, turning ;  
Their feet are heavy on the floor  
And their eyes are burning.

6. *Lay your Sleeping Head*

LAY your sleeping head, my love,  
Human on my faithless arm ;  
Time and fevers burn away  
Individual beauty from  
Thoughtful children, and the grave

W. H. AUDEN

Proves the child ephemeral :  
But in my arms till break of day  
Let the living creature lie,  
Mortal, guilty, but to me  
The entirely beautiful.

Soul and body have no bounds :  
To lovers as they lie upon  
Her tolerant enchanted slope  
In their ordinary swoon,  
Grave the vision Venus sends  
Of supernatural sympathy,  
Universal love and hope ;  
While an abstract insight wakes  
Among the glaciers and the rocks  
The hermit's sensual ecstasy.

Certainty, fidelity  
On the stroke of midnight pass  
Like vibrations of a bell,  
And fashionable madmen raise  
Their pedantic boring cry ;  
Every farthing of the cost,  
All the dreaded cards foretell  
Shall be paid, but from this night  
Not a whisper, not a thought,  
Not a kiss nor look be lost.

Beauty, midnight, vision dies :  
Let the winds of dawn that blow  
Softly round your dreaming head  
Such a day of sweetness show  
Eye and knocking heart may bless,

W. H. AUDEN

Find the mortal world enough ;  
Noons of dryness see you fed  
By the involuntary powers,  
Nights of insult let you pass  
Watched by every human love.

7. *Song for the New Year*

IT'S farewell to the drawing-room's civilised cry  
The professor's sensible whereto and why  
The frock-coated diplomat's social aplomb  
Now matters are settled with gas and with bomb.

The works for two pianos, the brilliant stories  
Of reasonable giants and remarkable fairies,  
The pictures, the ointments, the frangible wares,  
And the branches of olive are stored upstairs.

For the Devil has broken parole and arisen,  
He has dynamited his way out of prison,  
Out of the well where his Papa throws  
The rebel angel, the outcast rose.

Like influenza he walks abroad,  
He stands on the bridge, he waits by the ford ;  
As a goose or a gull he flies overhead,  
He hides in the cupboards and under the bed.

Assuming such shapes as may best disguise  
The hate that burns in his big blue eyes ;  
He may be a baby that croons in its pram,  
Or a dear old grannie boarding a tram :

W. H. AUDEN

A plumber, a doctor, for he has his skill  
To adopt a serious profession at will ;  
Superb at ice-hockey, a prince at the dance,  
He's fierce as the tiger, secretive as plants.

O were he to triumph, dear heart, you know  
To what depths of shame he would drag you low ;  
He would steal you away from me, yes, my dear,  
He would steal you and cut off your marvellous hair.

Millions already have come to their harm,  
Succumbing like doves to his adder's charm :  
Hundreds of trees in the wood are unsound ;  
I'm the axe that must cut them down to the ground.

For I, after all, am the fortunate one,  
The Happy-go-Lucky, the spoilt third son ;  
For me it is written the Devil to chase,  
And to rid the earth of the human race.

The behaving of man is a world of horror,  
A sedentary Sodom and slick Gomorrah :  
I must take charge of the liquid fire  
And storm the cities of human desire ;

The buying and selling, the eating and drinking,  
The disloyal machines and irreverent thinking,  
The lovely dullards again and again  
Inspiring their bitter ambitious men.

I shall come, I shall punish, the Devil be dead :  
I shall have caviare thick on my bread,  
I shall build myself a cathedral for home  
With a vacuum cleaner in every room.

W. H. AUDEN

I shall ride on the front in a platinum car,  
My features shall shine, my name shall be Star :  
Day long and night long the bells I shall peal,  
And down the long street I shall turn the cart wheel.

So Little John, Long John, Polly and Peg,  
And poor little Horace with only one leg,  
You must leave your breakfast, your desk, and your  
play  
On a fine summer morning the Devil to slay.

For it's order and trumpet and anger and drum,  
And power and glory command you to come :  
The graves shall fly open and suck you all in  
And the earth shall be emptied of mortal sin.

The fishes are silent deep in the sea,  
The skies are lit up like a Christmas tree,  
The star in the West shoots its warning cry :  
"Mankind is alive, but mankind must die."

So good-bye to the house with its wallpaper red,  
Good-bye to the sheets on the warm double bed,  
Good-bye to the beautiful birds on the wall,  
It's good-bye, dear heart, good-bye to you all.

8. *There are some Birds in these Valleys*

THERE are some birds in these valleys  
Who flutter round the careless  
With intimate appeal,  
By seeming kindness trained to snaring,  
They feel no falseness.



W. H. AUDEN

Under the spell completely  
They circle can serenely,  
And in the tricky light  
The masked hill has a purer greenness.  
Their flight looks fleeter.

But fowlers, O, like foxes,  
Lie ambushed in the rushes.  
Along the harmless tracks  
The madman keeper crawls through brushwood,  
Axe under oxters.

Alas, the signal given,  
Fingers on trigger tighten.  
The real unlucky dove  
Must smarting fall away from brightness  
Its love from living.

9.

*Blues*

STOP all the clocks, cut off the telephone ;  
Prevent the dog from barking with a juicy bone ;  
Silence the pianos, and with muffled drum  
Bring out the coffin, let the mourners come.

Let aeroplanes circle a moaning overhead,  
Scribbling on the sky the message : " He is dead."  
Put crêpe bows round the white necks of the public  
doves ;  
Let the traffic policemen wear black cotton gloves.

He was my North, my South, and East and West,  
My working week, and my Sunday rest ;

W. H. AUDEN

My noon, my midnight, my talk, my song ;  
I thought that love could last for ever : I was wrong.

The stars are not wanted now, put out every one ;  
Pack up the moon and dismantle the sun ;  
Pour away the ocean, and sweep up the wood :  
For nothing now can ever come to any good.

GEORGE BARKER

10. *Bamborough Castle*

HERE where no house no home is I stand,  
Looking down the sea lines of the island ;  
The mountains against the shore where the lions' locks  
Engarland in gold coils the great rocks,  
And the flower precariously over the cliff edge leans.  
I stand taking the air of the fountaining sea  
That sends up its salt and foam over me,  
While westward where no winds pester, the gulls  
Fall slowly downward, and rest on the waves' hands.

Yes and behind me I hear the sore-throated crows  
Creating their ruins of sound in the air by the ruins ;  
By Bamborough's ruins they rise and brood, or  
Poising in the air roar down at Promethean stone.  
I see them deliver an excrement of blood as they pass  
Or pitch their cries to crack the rock like glass :  
But the stone holds and the blood's white, and I, alone,  
Turning to discern the Bamborough mass,  
See wall and window and all solid as stone,  
Nor mess of blood smearing the gutted face.

## GEORGE BARKER

Then I know what it is I look upon like a ruin,  
The dilapidated palace on the promontory.  
I know what each stone is, and the Portland walls,  
The well like flute and diseased dungeon cells.  
What is it but me, but you, but you all,—  
Any man's many of days that make my life.  
His day stones and year walls and his tower,  
His flute of love and the festering cells of evil,  
All worn dangerous to trespassers, and the ghosts  
The consumptive and prophetic crows infest,  
Investing his pile of life with mess, their cries  
Threatening to raze him like the glass's bubble.

There where no house no home is I stood,  
Bamborough I, cracked open and crowned with blood,  
Disfigured by the birds I knew were no birds,  
But the heart haunting crow who kills with words.

### 11. *Paradisiacal Bird*

PARADISIACAL bird  
Of plumage flame  
Poised upon the bough  
Of glimmering bone

Whose wings of love  
Spread on the azur  
Of Time, traverse  
All space with ease :

Flame with all glory  
Life-phoenix, against

GEORGE BARKER

The awful and dark falling  
Time of Death.

12.

*The Seal Boy*

SEE he slips like insinuations  
Into the waves and sidles  
Across breakers, diving under  
The greater tidals,

Plunging, a small plane  
Down dark altitudes,  
Trailing bubbles like aerial bombs  
Or a balloon's broods.

O moving ecstatic boy  
Sliding through the gloomy seas  
Who bring me pearls to enjoy  
Rarer than to be found in these seas—

Between the fixed bars of your lips  
Darts the kiss like silver  
Fish, and in my wild grip  
You harbour, for ever.

13.

*The Leaping Laughters*

WHEN will men again  
Lift irresistible fists  
Not bend from ends  
But each man lift men  
Nearer again.

## GEORGE BARKER

Many men mean  
Well : but tall walls  
Impede, their hands bleed and  
They fall, their seed the  
Seed of the fallen.

See here the fallen  
Stooping over stones, over their  
Own bones : but all  
Stooping doom beaten.

Whom the noonday washes  
Whole, whom the heavens compel,  
And to whom pass immaculate messages,  
When will men again  
Lift irresistible fists  
Impede impediments  
Leap mountains laugh at walls ?

## JULIAN BELL

14.

### *Nonsense*

SING a song of sixpence,  
A pocketful of rye,  
The lover's in the garden  
And battle's in the sky.  
The banker's in the city  
Getting off his gold ;  
Oh isn't it a pity  
The rye can't be sold.

## JULIAN BELL

The queen is drinking sherry  
And dancing to a band ;  
A crowd may well feel merry  
That it does not understand.

The banker turns his gold about  
But that won't sell the rye,  
Starve and grow cold without,  
And ask the reason why  
The guns are in the garden,  
And battle's in the sky.

## LAURENCE BINYON

### 15. *Mediterranean Verses*

#### I

THE desert sands at day's swift flight  
Drank of the dew-cold vivid night  
Where Nile flows as he flowed  
When first men reaped and sowed,

As though his stream since Time began  
Bore all the history of Man,  
Vast ages lapsing brief  
As noiseless as a leaf.

But when the first high star, concealed  
By shadowing leaves above, revealed  
The glinting ripple, it seemed  
As the great water streamed

## LAURENCE BINYON

That ears attuned might hear the strings  
Plucked by the harpist for those kings  
Who in persistence fond  
Would be companion'd

Through the faint under-world, and still  
Press the firm-clustered grape and feel  
Wind from the fanning plume  
Sweetened with incense-fume ;

Still watch the honey-coloured grain  
Stiffen to ripeness on the plain  
Or dancers with slim flanks  
Circle in chiming ranks.

For Time, so old, must abdicate.  
Eyes and a smile that have no date  
Respond from chiselled stone  
Young as, each day, the dawn ;

And pullings of the carver's wrist  
So subtly in those curves persist,  
The presence in the form  
To touch is almost warm.

But like the pictures dreams make glow  
On darkness, that in daylight go  
So soon except they find  
Some lodging in the mind,

Only by beauty can these cross  
The dark stream of the dead to us.  
Only the hot sun dwells  
'Mid those long parallels

## LAURENCE BINYON

Of broken pillars, roofed with air,  
In temples of unanswered prayer ;  
And Gods unfeasted own  
Naught but a granite throne.

### II

Rain and the scolding wind's uproar  
And the black cloud befitted more  
The towering walls that hem  
Teeming Jerusalem ;

City of wailing, wrath, and blood,  
The city of the grave and shroud  
Whence arose the Word  
That brought so sharp a sword.

O city stubbornly enthroned !  
The city that the prophets stoned,  
Over which Jesus wept  
And proud Rome vainly swept.

But peace unearthly beamed above  
As from a brooding heaven of love  
The hill-surrounded sea  
Of lonely Galilee.

And we beneath those silent skies  
Walked among flowers of Paradise  
As if their happier seed  
Knew peace on earth indeed.

Peace, by the world praised and eschewed,  
Lived in that ageless solitude



## LAURENCE BINYON

And with no phrases deckt  
Shone richer in neglect ;

And under stony hills severe,  
Where sounds are few, we still could hear  
The shepherd from the rock  
Pipe to his wandering flock.

Remote beyond the Syrian bay  
At close of a long burning day  
Into the dusk still shone  
The snows of Lebanon.

### III

Morning came dancing, Morning warmed  
The blue sea-circle, whence she charmed  
Isle after isle to rise  
Rock-pointed toward the skies,

Whose names transfigured strand and cape  
Into a legendary shape  
Re-peopled from afar  
But to be brought more near ;

As if old ships and oar'd galleys  
Still swept along the silent seas ;  
Sailors of Tyre in quest  
Of the remoter West ;

The quick Athenian ; those who made  
Adventure of the long crusade,  
And Cleopatra's sail  
From Actium flying pale ;

## LAURENCE BINYON

And traffickers with old Byzance  
Past Patmos fading lost in trance ;  
And Paul afire within  
The sad world's soul to win ;

And doomed Othello Cyprus-bound.  
The islands rose and sank around,  
And when the day declined  
Their shadows filled the mind.

Dim in the dawn stood Hector's ghost  
Upon the mound where Troy lies lost.  
But through the straits we sped  
Turned to our dearer dead.

### IV

The hills divide, the seas unite  
The valleys of a land of light,  
But O how bare beside  
That Hellas glorified

Which, wasted, clan by warring clan,  
Yet made a splendour shine in Man  
By that inquiring will  
Whose way we follow still ;

Built in the mind his palace rare,  
Towered high as thought can dare  
And thronged with images  
Of joys and agonies,

Confronting destiny and wrong  
With the high-symbol'd scene, and song

## LAURENCE BINYON

Threading its music through  
The dark tale, else untrue.

But Time, so tender to a thought  
That branches up from living root,  
Has here unbuilt, defaced,  
And Beauty dispossessed,

Conniving with men's minds inert,  
Brute blows, and stupid skill to hurt,  
As if 'twere half their joy  
To maim and to destroy.

O Delphi, where all Hellas came  
To hear the awful Voice proclaim  
Fate, how beneath your steep  
Is all-forgetting sleep !

No voice, no votary, no shrine ;  
Though the long vale be still divine  
From that blue bay below  
To the far mountain snow,

And soundless noon that idly warms  
The scattered stones and shattered forms  
Only the shadow brings  
Of wheeling eagles' wings.

### V

In the last light a column glows  
Where once the white perfection rose  
Imperfectly divined  
By the rebuilding mind

## LAURENCE BINYON

Which treasures up a shape, a thought,  
From footprint or from echo caught,  
Hard gleanings that attest  
Oblivion has the best.

Fade coasts and isles, where the seed sown  
Still flowers in all we are and own.  
A future presses near  
Clouds of unshapen fear.

And now the ghostly, vast night-fall  
Like an age closing past recall  
Seems, and this darkening sea  
The wastes of history ;

The sea that no proud trophy claims  
For sunken ventures, foundered fames,  
Dishevelled navies tost,  
Ships like a bubble lost ;

That keeps no sure abiding form  
And rises in unconscious storm  
Whipt by an ignorant blast  
And when the fury's past

Sleeking its waves, mile after mile,  
Into the image of a smile.  
Is this what Time does still,  
Working a witless will ?

But through the dark, stopt by no seas,  
Pass other Powers and Presences  
Unseen from shore to shore,  
Armed and at conscious war,

## LAURENCE BINYON

Ideas, mightier than men,  
That seize and madden, free or chain.  
The things unprophesied  
Are certain, naught beside.

But end is none, though the storms break  
And the mind pale, and the heart shake  
Out of that future ring  
Far trumpets challenging.

## EDMUND BLUNDEN

16.

### *Bells*

WHAT master singer, with what glory amazed,  
Heard one day listening on the lonely air  
The tune of bells ere yet a bell was raised  
To throne it over field and flood? Who dare  
Deny him demi-god, that so could win  
The music uncreate, that so could wed  
Music and hue—till, when the bells begin,  
Song colours, colour sings? Beauty so bred  
Enspheres each hamlet through the English shires,  
And utters from ten thousand peeping spires  
(Or huge in starlight) to the outmost farms  
Sweet, young, grand, old. The country's lustiest  
arms  
Leap to the time till the whole sky retells  
That unknown poet's masterpiece of bells.

## EDMUND BLUNDEN

17.

### *April Byeway*

FRIEND whom I never saw, yet dearest friend,  
Be with me travelling on the byeway now  
In April's month and mood : our steps shall bend  
By the shut smithy with its penthouse brow  
Armed round with many a felly and crackt plough :  
And we will mark in his white smock the mill  
Standing aloof, long numbed to any wind,  
That in his crannies mourns, and craves him still ;  
But now no fortune sends him grain to grind,  
And even the master lies too deep for winds to find.

Grieve not at these : for there are mills amain  
With lusty sails that leap and drop away  
On further knolls, strong backs to fetch the grain.  
The schoolboys' wickets on the green betray  
New games begun and old ones put away.  
Let us fare on, dead friend, O deathless friend,  
Where under his old hat as green as moss  
The hedger chops and finds new gaps to mend,  
And on his bonfires burns the thorns and dross,  
And hums a hymn, the best, thinks he, that ever was.

There the grey guinea-fowl stands in the way,  
The young black heifer and the raw-ribbed mare,  
Scorning to move for tumbril or for dray—  
They feel themselves as good as farmers there.  
From the young corn the prick-eared leverets stare  
At strangers come to spy the land—small sirs,  
We bring less danger than the very breeze

## EDMUND BLUNDEN

Who in great zig-zag blows the bee, and whirs  
In bluebell shadow down the bright green leas ;  
From whom in frolic fit the chopt straw darts and flees.

The cherry steeping up in white shall know  
The two friends passing by, and poplar smile  
All gold within ; the church-top fowl shall glow  
To lure us on, and we shall rest awhile  
Where the wild apple blooms above the stile ;  
The yellow frog beneath blinks up half bold,  
Then scares himself into the deeper green.  
And thus spring was for you in days of old,  
And thus will be should I too walk unseen  
By one that thinks me friend, the best that there has  
been.

All our lone journey laughs for joy, the hours  
Like honey-bees go home in new-found light  
Past the cow-pond amazed with twinkling flowers  
And antique chalk-pit newly delved to white,  
Or idle snow-plough nearly hid from sight.  
The blackbird sings us home, on a sudden peers  
The round tower hung with ivy's blackened chains,  
Then past the little green the byeway veers,  
The mill-sweeps torn, the forge with cobwebbed  
panes  
That have so many years looked out across the plains.

But the old forge and mill are shut and done,  
The tower is crumbling down, stone by stone falls ;  
An ague doubt comes creeping in the sun,  
The sun becomes a ghost, the day appals,  
The concourse of a thousand tempests sprawls

## EDMUND BLUNDEN

Over the blue-lipped lakes and maddening groves,  
Like agonies of gods the clouds are whirled,  
The stormwind like the demon huntsman roves—  
Still stands my friend, though all's to chaos hurled,  
The unseen friend, the one last friend in all the world.

### 18. *Values*

TILL darkness lays a hand on these gray eyes  
And out of man my ghost is sent alone,  
It is my chance to know that force and size  
Are nothing but by answered undertone.  
No beauty even of absolute perfection  
Dominates here—the glance, the pause, the guess  
Must be my amulets of resurrection ;  
Raindrops may murder, lightnings may caress.

There I was tortured, but I cannot grieve ;  
There crowned and palaced—visibles deceive.  
That storm of belfried cities in my mind  
Leaves me my vespers cool and eglantined.  
From love's wide-flowering mountain-side I chose  
This sprig of green, in which an angel shows.

## CICELY BOAS

### 19. *The Gentleman in Yellow*

THE lady on the mantelpiece had flowers in her lap ;  
She wore a dainty yellow gown and ribbons in her  
cap ;



## CICELY BOAS

I was always rather sorry that the mantel was so wide,  
Because the yellow gentleman lived right the other side.

He was such a pretty fellow,  
And he had a little 'cello,  
And he would have liked the yellow  
Little lady for his bride.

They lived there all alone, with just a pair of Toby jugs,  
And a graded row—like organ pipes—of big and little  
mugs

Which I filled with yellow daffodils and kingcups in the  
spring,

And sometimes when I'd gone away the gentleman  
would sing.

He was such a merry fellow,  
Till I went and bought Othello  
And the Meissen Punchinello,  
And they ruined everything.

When the summer sun was shining and the buttercups  
in bloom

I used to fill the Toby jugs with spikes of yellow broom,  
And the gentleman would fiddle till the day when things  
went wrong

And the little yellow lady wouldn't listen to his song.

Was she smiling at Othello  
Or the Meissen Punchinello  
That the gentleman in yellow  
Had to play in vain so long?

And when autumn filled the garden I arranged the  
plummy sheaves

Of asphodel and golden rod and yellow autumn leaves

## CICELY BOAS

In the mugs upon the mantel, where they mingled in a  
hedge

Behind the little figures standing silent on the ledge ;  
And I wondered if Othello  
Or the Meissen Punchinello  
Pushed the gentleman in yellow  
So very near the edge ?

It may be she was fickle, so perhaps it served her right,  
But this morning, when I filled the mugs with winter  
aconite,

I found the yellow lady, who had seemed so coy of late,  
Bewailing very bitterly her little partner's fate.

For she didn't love Othello  
Or the Meissen Punchinello—  
And the gentleman in yellow  
Is in pieces in the grate.

## GUY BOAS

20.

### *To a Bicycle Bell*

**A**LAS, how many years have flown  
Since first your silvery note I sounded,  
And on a cycle of my own  
First o'er the bumps in boyhood bounded,  
And felt, like Icarus, the delight  
Of suddenly acquiring flight.

The roads were peaceful then ; no noise  
More strident than your ring intruded,

## GUY BOAS

And bells of other little boys  
Who also cycled (as a few did),  
And those of elder people who  
Sedately pedalled two-and-two.

But the inventive brain of man,  
As restless as the winds that fan it,  
Is always making some new plan  
To work commotion on our planet ;  
Especially it thinks we need  
Devices for increasing speed.

So motors came, and all was turned  
From peace to uproar in a twinkle ;  
The tempest blew, the waves were churned ;  
Your modest and melodious tinkle,  
Where hooters hoot and klaxons squall,  
Can scarcely now be heard at all.

Lorries and motor-buses dash  
Along the road which was my cycle's,  
And charabancs about me crash,  
Sounding a trump as loud as Michael's ;  
Amid the din it is absurd  
To try to make your tinkle heard.

When in the future I retire  
(So runs my fanciful reflection)  
And find some land of heart's desire  
Where everything will be perfection,  
Motors shall vanish like a dream  
And cycles be once more supreme.

## GUY BOAS

Then once again, my bell, you'll serve  
To warn pedestrians encroaching  
Upon my path. You'll not unnerve,  
But sweetly hint that I'm approaching,  
Nor, like the horn, instil dismay  
Into the people in the way.

Gently I'll pedal through the town  
And down the flowering lanes and by-ways,  
And nobody shall fly or frown  
At meeting me upon the highways,  
And even sergeants of police  
Shall smile upon my wheels of peace.

And children, looking close, will tell  
From signs beneath my looks seraphic  
That, Dante-like, I've been in hell—  
The hell of England's post-war traffic;  
And they will make it extra nice  
For one returned to Paradise.

21.

### *Doubt*

DESCARTES laid it down that a person may doubt  
The existence of everything under the sun  
Except of oneself: there's no doubting about  
The contrivance through which all the doubting is  
done.

This subtle, suggestive but puzzling remark  
In so many directions the lecturer twisted  
That he ended by leaving us all in the dark,  
For he caused us to doubt whether DESCARTES  
existed.

LILIAN BOWES LYON

22.

*Ploughing*

EARLY and pregnant hour ;  
Hazily sunbeams lacquer  
The flanks of horses ploughing the Fourteen Acre.  
They move in a cocoon of golden steam,  
The logical furrow following furled and spare.  
I saw the countryman tough behind his team,  
And paused to stare  
At his long shadow in Time, his tangent power.

23.

*The Hedge-row Story*

WHEN fields here lose their colour, when the wood  
trailing a hoary wing turns home  
to raven night, I reckon up the sum  
of rustic evil and clay-spattered good.

I think of the innumerable slow lives whose history  
differs a hairsbreadth from the hedge-row story :  
thorns in black competition, the roped glory  
of gossamer, soon gone,  
with berries dipped in blood.

When fields here lose the light, I fear the mystery  
of men like trees, that tower but touch the sky  
they cannot and are felled one by one,  
I think of saint and scarecrow schooled to die ;  
their leafless victory stands, where nothing stood.

*Maritime Invocation*

LADY, will you go with me  
over the dark, the wave-demented sea ?  
Lady, I must tell you  
how frail love's boat is,  
I must bring to your notice  
the skulls on the beach,  
the spars, foam-flecked, of ships wrecked.

Lady, are you brave enough  
to go on such a journey ?  
You will be safe enough,  
your hand in mine, till you know  
that passion's star is a falling star,  
and passion's voice a lost voice calling far  
into the dark and getting no reply.

Ah ! lady, though touch may fail us,  
waves intervening,  
there is no night so outrageous  
that our minds battened together  
may not weather,  
our hearts morticed as one rudder,  
keel set towards love's horizon.  
Lady, the dawn, the dawn shall break there,  
and the sun shall rise on these dangerous,  
these tide-torn waters.

Lady, will you go out with me  
on such a journey, and in such a sea ?

ROBERT BRIDGES

25

*Cheddar Pinks*

MID the squander'd colour  
    idling as I lay  
Reading the Odyssey  
    in my rock-garden  
I espied the cluster'd  
    tufts of Cheddar pinks  
Burgeoning with promise  
    of their scented bloom  
All the modish motley  
    of their bloom to be  
Thrust up in narrow buds  
    on the slender stalks.  
Thronging springing urgent  
    hasting (so I thought)  
As if they feared to be  
    too late for summer—  
Like schoolgirls overslept  
    waken'd by the bell  
Leaping from bed to don  
    their muslin dresses  
    On a May morning :

Then felt I like to one  
    indulging in sin  
(Whereto Nature is oft  
    a blind accomplice)  
Because my aged bones  
    so enjoyed the sun

## ROBERT BRIDGES

There as I lay along  
    idling with my thoughts  
Reading an old poet  
    while the busy world  
Toil'd moil'd fuss'd and scurried  
    worried bought and sold  
Plotted stole and quarrel'd  
    fought and God knows what.  
I had forgotten Homer  
    dallying with my thoughts  
Till I fell to making  
    these little verses  
Communing with the flowers  
    in my rock-garden  
    On a May morning.

## HILTON BROWN

### 26. *To a Panther*

“**B**EHOLD, the felon Pard hath slain a goat  
    Whereof he hath but tasted ; which thereby  
    He must revisit.” So they spoke, and I,  
Hopeful, allowed alluring dreams to float  
    Before mine eager eye—  
A mounted head for me, a panther coat  
For someone else, an honest evening's fun,  
Hazard, an outlaw slain, a good deed truly done.

And so for love of you I left my camp  
    And staggered weary miles into the blue  
    And sat in a *machan* the long night through,



## HILTON BROWN

Eaten by ants and crucified by cramp.  
And did you come? Not you.  
Phoebus went down and Dian raised her lamp;  
In solemn march the constellations passed;  
And now the dawn's afoot. . . . Home, John, ay, home  
at last!

Confound you, Pard, you spotted insolent!  
The feast was ready and the table spread;  
Why were you not by common cravings led,  
By appetites and ravening hungers rent,  
That clamoured to be fed?  
Why not have dined—or come with that intent  
And trysted with the poor benighted bard,  
Instead of backing out like this? Oh, curse you, Pard!

And yet—and yet—so sweet, so passing fair,  
So magical was this sequestered spot  
(Of *your* selection) that the bard forgot,  
So soon as evening wandered down the air,  
He had been tired and hot;  
And sat bewitched and drank the nectar rare  
Of dew and sunset and the scented flowers,  
Till lastly rose the moon; and then came fairy hours.

Came last the moon with solace in her train,  
And thoughts that shun rude day's bedevillings,  
And night-time fantasies on timid wings,  
And but for you in slumber I had lain  
Missing these lovely things;  
And, though you should, to crown it, have been slain,  
I grudge you not your night of happiness,  
For I—well, after all, I too have had no less.

## HILTON BROWN

And so let's say all's happened for the best.

I'll to the homeward byways ghostly lit

With waning moonshine ; you the while may flit  
Down scented glades on your eternal quest—

Lord give you joy of it !

And, though you would not come at my behest,  
Let's hope you bag some fat upstanding buck.  
Good hunting, friend, to you ; good night, dear Pard,  
good luck !

## ROY CAMPBELL

27.

### *Autumn*

I LOVE to see, when leaves depart,  
The clear anatomy arrive,  
Winter, the paragon of art,  
That kills all forms of life and feeling  
Save what is pure and will survive.

Already now the clanging chains  
Of geese are harnessed to the moon :  
Stripped are the great sun-clouding planes :  
And the dark pines, their own revealing,  
Let in the needles of the noon.

Strained by the gale the olives whiten  
Like hoary wrestlers bent with toil  
And, with the vines, their branches lighten  
To brim our vats where summer lingers  
In the red froth and sun-gold oil.

## ROY CAMPBELL

Soon on our hearth's reviving pyre  
Their rotted stems will crumble up :  
And like a ruby, panting fire,  
The grape will redden on your fingers  
Through the lit crystal of the cup.

28.

### *The Serf*

HIS naked skin clothed in the torrid mist  
That puffs in smoke around the patient hooves,  
The ploughman drives, a slow somnambulist,  
And through the green his crimson furrow grooves.  
His heart, more deeply than he wounds the plain,  
Long by the rasping share of insult torn,  
Red clod, to which the war-cry once was rain  
And tribal spears the fatal sheaves of corn,  
Lies fallow now. But as the turf divides  
I see in the slow progress of his strides  
Over the toppled clods and falling flowers,  
The timeless, surly patience of the serf  
That moves the nearest to the naked earth  
And ploughs down palaces, and thrones, and towers.

29.

### *Horses on the Camargue*

IN the grey wastes of dread,  
The haunt of shattered gulls where nothing moves  
But in a shroud of silence like the dead,  
I heard a sudden harmony of hooves,  
And, turning, saw afar  
A hundred snowy horses unconfined,

## ROY CAMPBELL

The silver runaways of Neptune's car  
Racing, spray-curved, like waves before the wind.  
Sons of the Mistral, fleet  
As him with whose strong gusts they love to flee,  
Who shod the flying thunders on their feet  
And plumed them with the snortings of the sea ;  
Theirs is no earthly breed  
Who only haunt the verges of the earth  
And only on the sea's salt herbage feed—  
Surely the great white breakers gave them birth.  
For when for years a slave,  
A horse of the Camargue, in alien lands,  
Should catch some far-off fragrance of the wave  
Carried far inland from his native sands,  
Many have told the tale  
Of how in fury, foaming at the rein,  
He hurls his rider ; and with lifted tail,  
With coal-red eyes and cataracting mane,  
Heading his course for home,  
Though sixty foreign leagues before him sweep,  
Will never rest until he breathes the foam  
And hears the native thunder of the deep.  
But when the great gusts rise  
And lash their anger on these arid coasts,  
When the scared gulls career with mournful cries  
And whirl across the waste like driven ghosts :  
When hail and fire converge,  
The only souls to which they strike no pain  
Are the white-crested fillies of the surge  
And the white horses of the windy plain.  
Then in their strength and pride  
The stallions of the wilderness rejoice ;  
They feel their Master's trident in their side,

## ROY CAMPBELL

And high and shrill they answer to his voice.  
With white tails smoking free,  
Long streaming manes, and arching necks, they show  
Their kinship to their sisters of the sea—  
And forward hurl their thunderbolts of snow.  
Still out of hardship bred,  
Spirits of power and beauty and delight  
Have ever on such frugal pastures fed  
And loved to course with tempests through the night.

## G. M. COOKSON

### 30. *Peg-top Time*

PEG-TOP time has come again ;  
The air is rough and raw ;  
Green grows the wild plum down the lane,  
Dull red the wrinkled haw.

Shrill to a sky of cinnamon  
The cock of dawn has crowed ;  
And the wind is up like a poor man's son,  
Free of the broad, bleak road.

The road that's white as a greybeard's face,  
Long as a lawyer's bill ;  
And yet it is a lusty place  
When the wind comes over the hill.

So jump, my joes in corduroys,  
Or he will pinch you blue ;

G. M. COOKSON

Romp with the wind, ye hardy boys,  
And he will romp with you.

Dunce, here's a fellow to your pate ;  
Crack on, you scholar quick ;  
I guess the calculus of Fate  
Beats your arithmetic.

But here the master of the ring  
In childhood's magic O  
With your top and your stick and your bit  
of string  
Be happier than you know.

Old Time will plait you thicker thongs  
And crunch with harder heel ;  
This sunshine-hour to you belongs ;  
You are the joy you feel.

31.

*The Blind Sailor*

LEAD out the blind sailor that once was England's  
pride,  
A bold man and a burly and a man of jest was he :  
Lead out the blind sailor on the green hillside,  
A pale light falling on the old gray sea.

Lead out the blind sailor ; go tenderly and slow,  
For he is but a withered leaf was once a goodly tree ;  
His feeble feet falter and his spirits are sunk low  
That once were as a billow when the sun shines on the  
sea.

G. M. COOKSON

Lead on the blind sailor and let him feel the sun,  
For weary will winter and the white fog be,  
And the wind in the chimney sound like a warning  
    gun  
When a blind ship crawls to her grave in the sea.

Lead home the blind sailor ; set him down by his fire-  
    side ;  
And he'll pipe a cheerful song that's a sad song to me ;  
And if I too grow dim-eyed my tears I need not hide,  
For those salt drops of sorrow my sailor cannot see.

FRANCES CORNFORD

32.                      *A Glimpse*

O GRASSES wet with dew, yellow fallen leaves,  
Smooth-shadowed waters Milton loved, green  
    banks,  
Arched bridges, rooks, and rain-leaved willow-trees,  
Stone, serious familiar colleges,  
For ever mine.  
The figure of a scholar carrying back  
Books to the library—absorbed, content,  
Seeming as everlasting as the elms  
Bark-wrinkled, puddled round their roots, the bells,  
And the far shouting in the football fields.

The same since I was born, the same to be  
When all my children's children grow old men.

*The Mongrel*

YOUR Laurel Hedge, with its broad leaves,  
Keeps fresh and green from year to year ;  
While that poor Wayside, Mongrel hedge,  
In Winter time goes thin and bare.  
But when October's in his prime,  
How beautiful that Mongrel grows—  
Where Blackberry, Thorn and other leaves  
Can make a hundred shining hues !  
In singles, twins, and triplets too,  
In bunch and cluster, high and low,  
I see his fruits in heavy folds,  
Or fluttering lightly to and fro.  
The Apple with her beauty-moles,  
The beady Currant, glassy-eyed ;  
The golden Corn, all naked there,  
Without a leaf on either side.  
The nipped Pear and misty Plum,  
The yellow Quince and Cherry red ;  
The crimson Strawberry, full of dimples,  
Now lying so low in her bed.  
Let no man touch this Mongrel now,  
Nor dare to pick his fruit, for fear  
That Wizard turns his gorgeous feast  
To shrivelled leaves, all limp and sere.



W. H. DAVIES

34.

*Frost*

WHAT swords and spears, what daggers bright  
He arms the morning with ! How light  
His powder is, that's fit to lie  
On the wings of a butterfly !  
What milk-white clothing he has made  
For every little twig and blade !  
What curious silver work is shown  
On wood and iron, glass and stone !  
" If you, my slim Jack Frost, can trace  
This work so fine, so full of grace,  
Tell me," I said, " before I go—  
Where is your plump young sister, Snow ? "

35.

*The Poet*

WHEN I went down past Charing Cross,  
A plain and simple man was I ;  
I might have been no more than air,  
Unseen by any mortal eye.

But, Lord in Heaven, had I the power  
To show my inward spirit there,  
Then what a pack of human hounds  
Had hunted me, to strip me bare.

A human pack, ten thousand strong,  
All in full cry to bring me down ;  
All greedy for my magic robe,  
All crazy for my burning crown.

CECIL DAY LEWIS

36.

*The Ecstatic*

LARK, skylark, spilling your rubbed and round  
Pebbles of sound in air's still lake,  
Whose widening circles fill the noon ; yet none  
Is known so small beside the sun :

Be strong your fervent soaring, your skyward air !  
Tremble there, a nerve of song !  
Float up there where voice and wing are one,  
A singing star, a note of light !

Buoyed, embayed in heaven's noon-wide reaches—  
For soon light's tide will turn—Oh stay !  
Cease not till day streams to the west, then down  
That estuary drop down to peace.

37.

*Learning to Talk*

SEE this small one, tiptoe on  
The green foothills of the years,  
Views a younger world than yours ;  
When you go down, he'll be the tall one.

Dawn's dew is on his tongue—  
No word for what's behind the sky,  
Naming all that meets the eye,  
Pleased with sunlight over a lawn.

Hear his laughter. He can't contain  
The exquisite moment overflowing.

CECIL DAY LEWIS

Limbs leaping, woodpecker flying  
Are for him and not hereafter.

Tongue trips, recovers, triumphs,  
Turning all ways to express  
What the forward eye can guess—  
That time is his and earth young.

We are growing too like trees  
To give the rising wind a voice :  
Eagles shall build upon our verse,  
Our winged seeds are to-morrow's sowing.

Yes, we learn to speak for all  
Whose hearts here are not at home,  
All who march to a better time  
And breed the world for which they burn.

38.

*A Time to Dance*

FOR those who had the power  
of the forest fires that burn  
Leaving their source in ashes  
to flush the sky with fire :  
Those whom a famous urn  
could not contain, whose passion  
Brimmed over the deep grave  
and dazzled epitaphs :  
For all that have won us wings  
to clear the tops of grief,  
My friend who within me laughs  
bids you dance and sing.

## CECIL DAY LEWIS

Some set out to explore  
    earth's limit, and little they recked if  
Never their feet came near it  
    outgrowing the need for glory :  
Some aimed at a small objective  
    but the fierce updraught of their spirit  
Forced them to the stars.

Are honoured in public who built  
The dam that tamed a river ;  
    or holding the salient for hours  
Against odds, cut off and killed,  
    are remembered by one survivor.

All these. But most for those  
    whom accident made great,  
As a radiant chance encounter  
    of cloud and sunlight grows  
Immortal on the heart :  
    whose gift was the sudden bounty  
Of a passing moment, enriches  
    the fulfilled eye for ever.  
Their spirits float serene  
    above time's roughest reaches,  
But their seed is in us and over  
    our lives they are evergreen.

### 39. *When Nature plays Hedge-Schoolmaster*

WHEN nature plays hedge-schoolmaster,  
    Shakes out the gaudy map of summer  
And shows me charabanc, rose, barley-ear  
And every bright-winged hummer,

## CECIL DAY LEWIS

He only would require of me  
To be the sponge of natural laws  
And learn no more of that cosmography  
Than passes through the pores.

Why must I then unleash my brain  
To sweat after some revelation  
Behind the rose, heedless if truth maintain  
On the rose-bloom her station ?

When bullying April bruised mine eyes  
With sleet-bound appetites and crude  
Experiments of green, I still was wise  
And kissed the blossoming rod.

Now summer brings what April took,  
Riding with fanfares from the south,  
And I should be no Solomon to look  
My Sheba in the mouth.

Charabancs shout along the lane  
And summer gales bay in the wood  
No less superbly because I can't explain  
What I have understood.

Let logic analyse the hive,  
Wisdom's content to have the honey :  
So I'll go bite the crust of things and thrive  
While hedgerows still are sunny.

CECIL DAY LEWIS

o.     *Do not Expect again a Phoenix Hour*

DO not expect again a phoenix hour,  
The triple-towered sky, the dove complaining,  
Sudden the rain of gold and heart's first ease  
Tranced under trees by the eldritch light of sundown.

By a blazed trail our joy will be returning :  
One burning hour throws light a thousand ways,  
And hot blood stays into familiar gestures.  
The best years wait, the body's plenitude.

Consider then, my lover, this is the end  
Of the lark's ascending, the hawk's unearthly hover :  
Spring season is over soon and first heatwave ;  
Grave-browed with cloud ponders the huge horizon.

Draw up the dew.   Swell the pacific violence.  
Take shape in silence.   Grow as the clouds grew.  
Beautiful brood the cornlands, and you are heavy ;  
Leafy the boughs—they also hide big fruit.

1.             *Oh Hush Thee, my Baby*

OH hush thee, my baby,  
Thy cradle's in pawn :  
No blankets to cover thee  
Cold and forlorn.  
The stars in the bright sky  
Look down and are dumb  
At the heir of the ages  
Asleep in a slum.

CECIL DAY LEWIS

The hooters are blowing,  
No heed let him take ;  
When baby is hungry  
'Tis best not to wake.  
Thy mother is crying,  
Thy dad's on the dole :  
Two shillings a week is  
The price of a soul.

WALTER DE LA MARE

42.

*A Robin*

GHOST-GREY the fall of night,  
Ice-bound the lane,  
Lone in the dying light  
Flits he again ;  
Lurking where shadows steal,  
Perched in his coat of blood,  
Man's homestead at his heel,  
Death-still the wood.

Odd restless child ; it's dark ;  
All wings are flown  
But this one wizard's—hark !—  
Stone clapped on stone !  
Changeling and solitary,  
Secret and sharp and small,  
Flits he from tree to tree,  
Calling on all.

43.

*The Little Creature*

TWINKUM, twankum, twirlum, twitch—  
 My great grandam—She was a Witch,  
 Mouse in Wainscot, Saint in niche—  
 My great grandam—She was a Witch ;  
 Deadly nightshade flowers in a ditch—  
 My great grandam—She was a Witch ;  
 Long though the shroud, it grows stitch by stitch—  
 My great grandam—She was a Witch ;  
 Wean your weakling before you breech—  
 My great grandam—She was a Witch ;  
 The fattest pig's but a double flitch—  
 My great grandam—She was a Witch ;  
 Nightjars rattle, owls scritch—  
 My great grandam—She was a Witch.

Pretty and small,  
 A mere nothing at all,  
 Pinned up sharp in the ghost of a shawl,  
 She'd straddle her down to the kirkyard wall,  
 And mutter and whisper and call,  
 And call. . . .

Red blood out and black blood in,  
 My Nannie says I'm a child of sin.  
 How did I choose me my witchcraft kin ?  
 Know I as soon as dark's dreams begin  
 Snared is my heart in a nightmare's gin ;  
 Never from terror I out may win ;  
 So—dawn and dusk—I pine, peak, thin,  
 Scarcely beknowing t'other from which—  
 My great grandam—She was a Witch.



WALTER DE LA MARE

44.

*Snow*

THIS meal-white snow—  
Oh, look at the bright fields,  
What crystal manna  
Death-cold winter yields !

Falling from heavens  
Earth knows little of,  
Yet mantling it  
As with a flawless love—

A shining cloak—  
It to the naked gives,  
Wooing all sorrow  
From the soul it shrives.

Adam no calmer vales  
Than these descried,  
Leda a shadow were  
This white beside.

Water stays still for wonder ;  
Herb and flower,  
Else starved with cold  
In warmth and darkness cower

Miracle, far and near  
That starry flake  
Can of its myriads  
Such wide pasture make,

For sun to colour  
And for moon to wan,

WALTER DE LA MARE

And day's vast vault of blue  
To arch upon !

A marvel of light,  
Whose verge of radiance seems  
Frontier of paradise,  
The bourne of dreams.

O tranquil, silent, cold—  
Such loveliness to see  
The heart sighs answer,  
*Benedicite !*

JOHN DRINKWATER

45.                   *Who were before Me*

**L**ONG time in some forgotten churchyard earth of  
Warwickshire,  
My fathers in their generations lie beyond desire,  
And nothing breaks the rest, I know, of John Drink-  
water now,

Who left in sixteen-seventy his roan team at plough.

And James, son of John, is there, a mighty ploughman  
too,

Skilled he was at thatching and the barleycorn brew,  
And he had a heart-load of sorrow in his day,  
But ten score of years ago he put it away.

Then Thomas came, and played a fiddle cut of mellow  
wood,

## JOHN DRINKWATER

And broke his heart, they say, for love that never  
came to good.  
A hundred winter peals and more have rung above  
his bed—  
O, poor eternal grief, so long, so lightly, comforted.  
And in the gentle yesterday these were but glimmer-  
ing tombs,  
Or tales to tell on fireside eves of legendary dooms ;  
I being life while they were none, what had their dust  
to bring  
But cold intelligence of death upon my tides of  
Spring ?  
Now grief is in my shadow, and it seems well enough  
To be there with my fathers, where neither fear nor  
love  
Can touch me more, nor spite of men, nor my own  
teasing blame,  
While the slow mosses weave an end of my for-  
gotten name.

## CLIFFORD DYMENT

46.

### *Glory*

WHEN you were speaking I was not with you,  
I heard none of the words you said ;  
I was translated from  
My sensible head.

I was a giant, drunk  
With the ichor of every vine ;

## CLIFFORD DYMENT

I set fire to the Australian bush—  
My brand was a mountain pine.

Men were assembled in Parliament :  
I kicked the building over ;  
I gave the Brooklyn bridge a shake,  
And it fell into the river.

By dipping in my little finger  
I could make an ocean boil ;  
In my palm, the iron warship  
Had the charm of crinkled foil.

I was happy, squeezing crowds  
To suffocation with my hand :  
I was the thunder in the storm,  
The havoc in the bombed land.

Loitering on Ludgate Hill  
I shut St. Paul's up like a book :  
I laughed so loud at this huge jest  
That continents shook.

47.

### *A Christmas Poem*

I SEE him burning in a flame  
White as a narcissus  
Upon the pointed tree with silver lights  
In the jolly house.

I hear him in the bells that peal  
In the square stone tower,  
And in the winter atmosphere  
He crackles like hoar.

## CLIFFORD DYMENT

You who laugh and dance in brilliance,  
And you who dream of wealth,  
And you, the solemn-eyed, who grieve  
For the world's thin faith,

Come, for he comes, he who burns, rings  
In bells ; he who knew well  
A child's curls, and the sun-flushed rose,  
And the icicle.

48.

### *Fox*

**E**XPLOITER of the shadows  
He moved among the fences,  
A strip of action coiling  
Around his farmyard fancies.

With shouting fields are shaken,  
The spinneys give no shelter ;  
There is delight for riders,  
For hounds a tooth in shoulder.

The creature tense with wildness  
Knows death is sudden falling  
From fury into weary  
Surrendering of feeling.

## RICHARD EBERHART

49.

### *The Groundhog*

**I**N June, amid the golden fields,  
I saw a groundhog lying dead.

## RICHARD EBERHART

Dead lay he ; my senses shook,  
And mind outshot our naked frailty.  
There lowly in the vigorous summer  
His form began its senseless change,  
And made my senses waver dim  
Seeing nature ferocious in him.  
Inspecting close his maggot's might  
And seething cauldron of his being,  
Half with loathing, half with a strange love,  
I poked him with an angry stick.  
The fever arose, became a flame  
And Vigour circumscribed the skies,  
Immense energy in the sun,  
And through my frame a sunless trembling.  
My stick had done nor good nor harm.  
Then stood I silent in the day  
Watching the object, as before ;  
And kept my reverence for knowledge  
Trying for control, to be still,  
To quell the passion of the blood ;  
Until I had bent down on my knees  
Praying for joy in the sight of decay  
And so I left ; and I returned  
In Autumn strict of eye, to see  
The sap gone out of the groundhog,  
But the bony sodden hulk remained.  
But the year had lost its meaning,  
And in intellectual chains  
I lost both love and loathing,  
Mured up in the wall of wisdom.  
Another summer took the fields again  
Massive and burning, full of life,  
But when I chanced upon the spot

## RICHARD EBERHART

There was only a little hair left,  
And bones bleaching in the sunlight  
Beautiful as architecture ;  
I watched them like a geometer,  
And cut a walking stick from a birch.  
It has been three years, now.  
There is no sign of the groundhog.  
I stood there in the whirling summer,  
My hand capped a withered heart,  
And thought of China and of Greece,  
Of Alexander in his tent ;  
Of Montaigne in his tower,  
Of Saint Theresa in her wild lament.

## ROBIN FLOWER

50.

### *Personality*

YOU have not been before  
And will not be again,  
Not just that confident glance and spirit sure  
Nor cheek of just that grain,  
Your stillness like checked speed,  
Your going like a spear,  
Quick eyes and swift voice instant to the need  
And light laugh crystal-clear.

These things not Helen owned,  
Not she of Egypt, nor  
That loveliness that the wise people stoned  
Lest it should bring them war,  
Not whatsoe'er was sweet  
In the world's spring, or when

## ROBIN FLOWER

Summer and arduous autumn made complete  
All beauty among men.

And if before the end  
All lovely things were brought,  
All perilous dreams great spirits had to friend  
Too high for human thought,  
All the witched world found rare,  
All fire, all light, all dew,  
All stars inhabiting the heavenly air—  
They would not make up you.

For still behind these things  
That are but as your dress  
You hide in you and from your spirit's springs  
Feed that high loveliness,  
Which having wrought, the gods  
Go sorrowing for Time's sake,  
Who makes and in his hurrying periods  
Must all things made unmake.

## JOHN FREEMAN

51.

### *The Ship*

WAS that a sound ?  
If sound it was, 'tis gone :  
Silence returns all ound,

As if a star had shone  
A moment from the black ;  
Or a white bird on



## JOHN FREEMAN

Dark waves, then back  
Past sight had flown  
With flying scud and rack.

It was a sound  
Singing very near,  
Whispering all round,

Dying on the ear :  
It was the wind  
Thin and clear

Running behind,  
Then somewhere overhead  
Moving like one blind

That feels his way  
In the gentle dark  
Of night and day.

Between the wires stark  
The wind stirred :  
Hark, hark !

Gone—as a bird  
Half seen, unknown.  
Our ears heard,

And the sound has flown.  
But the listening mind  
Trembles on . . . on.

JOHN FREEMAN

52.

*The Centaurs*

THE silken horses chafe and shift  
Under the falling chestnut petals,  
Tossing aloft cream-foamy crests,  
A fine rain slants, the blown dust settles.

The silken horses leap at last,  
Are curbed, released, re-curbed, requickened :  
Like swift rain slanted from the hills  
Or thin beams before clouds have thickened

They flow down the hill's flowing breast.  
Leap now the horses into meadows,  
Through waves of grasses plunge and slide  
Bearing their riders light as shadows.

The riders with the heaving shapes  
Inblent wade through the grassy surges  
In centaur-wise, lift glittering eyes  
Nearing the salt sea's hoary margins.

The salt sea blossoms whiter fall,  
Wilder the waves of the salt sea meadows.  
Horses and horsemen centaur-wise  
Plunge and vanish sudden as shadows.

## JOHN GAWSWORTH

53.

### *Roman Headstone*

*JULIA, carissima Julia,*  
Strange how you hold a beauty for me now  
As though no sixteen centuries had dimmed your  
    charm,  
And only crusted stones remained to trace  
Your exile life, here where I seek not balm  
To heal such wounds of body as once scarred your lord,  
But silence for my mind and peace for hands  
That they may cease their restless artifice  
And stretch at ease in tendrils and grass strands !

*Julia, carissima Julia,*  
Strange that no woman bears the likeness now  
That you have set upon my tablet mind,  
Not in obliterated text as here  
*In perpetuum ave* carved I find,  
A valediction lichenised and broken !  
Beyond what ultimate are you ? I ponder.  
*In perpetuum ave atque vale.*

Julia, where do you wander ?

54.

### *The Mill*

**T**URVILLE Mill is broken,  
The fabric starkly rent ;  
Yet stands it to betoken  
Decay's slow argument.

JOHN GAWSWORTH

In wind-blown dereliction  
The shaking antic spars  
Creak their last malediction  
Against the eternal stars.

WILFRID GIBSON

55. *The Hood-Seals*

THE ice-blink quivered in the sky : I smelt  
The smell of ice, and in my marrow felt  
The chill of the floe's approaching days before  
We set out, sealing, from the Island shore,  
First of the wooden-walls that sealing-spring  
Out from the harbour of St. John's, to bring  
In hulls of oak and greenheart a rich spoil  
Of harp and hood sculps, fat with blubber oil :  
And when we sailed the ice was still unseen  
Even from the truck-slung barrel where the keen  
Eyes of the scunner strained for the first sight  
Of the southward-drifting icefield, vast and white,  
That brought to us our harvest of hair-seal.

And so, day after day, with thrusting keel  
The ship bore north through buffeting short seas  
That sluiced the decks, till spray began to freeze  
Our beards to glass, and stiffen stay and shroud  
With ice one night as, under driving cloud  
That, blinding, baffled the chink-seeking moon,  
We steamed : but dawn came, clear-horized, and  
soon

## WILFRID GIBSON

The masthead-lookout gave the welcome cry—  
“Ice! Ice!”—and every northward-staring eye  
Glimpsed glimmering level and glittering hummock  
and spire

Kindling already in the dawn's red fire.  
And then from nowhere fog swirled suddenly  
Like giant swathes of gossamer over the sea;  
And with the fog the snow came, hard and dry,  
Driving down on us from the unseen sky.  
Yet still we battled slowly towards the floe  
Through mist and blizzard, cloaked with clogging snow,  
Northward and ever northward till we felt  
The steel-shod cutwater crash into a belt  
Of rafting pans and growlers; and so knew  
We neared the whelping-ice we must cut through,  
The stout ship standing up to strain and stress,  
Till we should reach its innermost recess,  
The secret white heart, whose security  
From shark and narwal or prowling enemy  
The timid harp-seals seek year after year,  
Trusting in peace their tender young to rear,  
The blubber-padded whitecoats who supply  
The richest oil for soap, and so must die!

Day after day through that ice-cluttered sea  
We steamed through flurry and smother steadily;  
And, as we pushed on blindly, we could feel  
Half-sunken growlers gride along the keel  
And slob-ice graze the beam and butt the bow  
That crunched through bobbing hunks and chunks  
that now

Closed on us, crowding and jostling; and then the snow  
Stopped suddenly; and we saw the great main floe

## WILFRID GIBSON

ght on us ; and the fog began to clear  
we could take our bearings and then steer  
or a free channel through the mounded ice  
to its heart where, gripped, as in a vice,  
7 the main-ridge pressure, our wooden walls might  
crush

ke matchboard on us. So, through sish and slush  
nd slob we steamed 'twixt ice-walls, till at last  
hummock barred our passage and jammed us fast  
s the cut froze in astern. We leapt to the floe  
7ith poles, ice-saws and chisels ; and, numb and slow,  
7e cut and thrust and tugged, with a hawser lashed  
o the bollards, till the hummock in splinters crashed  
bout the butting bow ; and free again  
7e sailed awhile until we thrust in vain  
gainst a huger hummock that blocked our course,  
or all our butting and cutting ; and we'd to force  
nd blast our way through it with dynamite.

o, on into the floe by day and night,  
utting and blasting, in blizzard and fog and bright  
7hite blinding spells of sunshine, we pierced our way  
ntil at last at the red end of a day  
f crazing killing cold we grinned to see  
hat we had reached the harp-seal rookery,  
he crowded main-patch upon which we burst  
hrough a great hummock, proud to get there first.

nd on that waste of whelping-ice all night  
Veath shivering spears and quivering crowns of light,  
urple and green, and sweeping swords of white  
There the aurora blazing over us hung,  
he barking harp-seals and their bawling young

## WILFRID GIBSON

Kept up a clamour ; and I could not sleep,  
But sought the deck again and again, to peep  
At the silly scrambling puppies playing there  
So happily under that fantastic flare ;  
And watched them from the glassy deck alone  
Until the cold, icing me to the bone,  
Drove me below . . .

At glint of dawn began  
The slaughter of the innocents, each man,  
As in a frenzy of murder, clubbing dead  
The plump whitecoats whose frightened parents fled,  
Showing no fight, just scrambling frantically  
Before us, flapping and barking helplessly.

And I, too, young and heedless and half-crazed  
With cold and that nightmare passage, ran and raised  
My gaff to strike ; and saw black baby eyes  
Looking up at me, fearless, with no surprise  
In their dark stare . . . I struck . . . then heard a  
shout . . .

And, dizzy and half-sick, I turned about,  
To see my messmates, running before a herd  
Of the huge fighting hoods that, anger-stirred  
By the slaughter, from behind a hummock surged,  
Through fellow-feeling for their seal-kind urged  
To the rescue of the timid harps . . .

Astare

I stood and waited, stunned and frozen there :  
And a great bull was on me in a trice  
Roaring . . . I struck at him . . . slipped on the ice . . .  
And knew no more . . .

Though, seemingly, the ship  
Was nipped and crushed to touchwood in the grip

## WILFRID GIBSON

Of suddenly-rafting ice . . . at least no more  
Was heard of her . . . and it seems my comrades bore  
My senseless body back across the floe,  
Struggling and blundering through the baffling snow,  
Till, one by one, done in by cold, they fell  
In fatal frost-sleep on that field of hell . . .  
Yet I, though how, it seems I'll never know,  
Was rescued from the death-trap of the floe . . .  
Happen another ship's crew . . .

But the fear  
Of that huge hood-seal lunging—though quite clear  
I can recall each instant of that dread  
Hell-passage into the ice—strikes my heart dead,  
Again and yet again, when I would think . . .  
Striving to take a hold on life, I sink  
Under that ferocious onslaught . . .  
And, night and day,  
Retracing and retracing its blind way  
Through fog and blizzard, my numb soul struggles,  
until  
I stand once more with gaff upraised to kill . . .

56.

### *Out of the Air*

NO song-bird will ever  
Come to my call ;  
But when I am thinking  
Of nothing at all,  
Thinking of nothing  
And going nowhere,  
Out of the air  
The crystal notes fall.



## LORD GORELL

57.

### *The Coat*

#### I

IT was the evening of an awesome day.  
The sun sank early into blood-red wrath ;  
Darkness came ravening ; tempests arose,  
Hungriely howling, and the path  
Of every traveller beset like birds of prey :  
Great rocks were shattered as with giants' blows ;  
Earth shook ; from cloud-banks streamed the rain :  
No concord was there in the world but pain.

#### II

Dismissed from duty, straight the soldier went,  
Buffeting his way, his spoil beneath his arm,  
To visit one that in an alien land  
Round his rough heart had twined a charm.  
As to his goal he strode, indifferent  
That murmuring, frightened crowds his passage  
scanned,  
His thoughts, as all that day, were turned  
To one sick child whose friendship he had earned.

#### III

Anxious he was, yet unfamiliar peace  
Walked strangely with him through the streets of  
storm :  
He clutched its comfort as his steps drew nigh.  
The mother breathed, " Welcome thy form !

## LORD GORELL

He hath been crying for thee, hath no ease  
Without thee, and even now is like to die ! ”  
With twofold pang his heart gave heed,  
Sweet to be needed, bitter such the need.

### IV

The child's face flushed to feel his playmate there  
Touching his hand with awkward tenderness.  
“ Ah me,” the mother sighed, “ but he is cold ! ”  
“ The gods, then, this day's labour bless,”  
The soldier cried ; “ that ill I can repair ! ”  
He grasped his bundle and a coat unrolled.  
“ See what I have for thee ! ” he smiled,  
And wrapped it gently round the dying child.

### V

The storm had ended : as the soldier came  
It ceased as if his hand had closed the door  
On all but Love. Within a silent room  
They watched a sleeping child : no more  
Their eyes were wan upon a wasted frame ;  
They saw in wonder all his childhood bloom.  
“ The coat has snatched him from the dead !  
See how he sleeps ! ” the mother, marvelling, said.

### VI

“ His lips are pressed against it, and his hands  
Clutch at its folds as he had found a friend  
To gather to his very heart : it seems  
Almost as though his ears attend  
Upon an unseen healer who commands

## LORD GORELL

The fever halt and turn to tranquil dreams !  
Dost thou not also mark the change ?  
Whence hast thou brought this coat ? 'Tis passing  
strange ! ”

### VII

“ By lucky cast I won it : I have been,”  
The soldier answered, “ on that stark hillside  
Holding the rabble, keeping watch all day  
Upon three felons crucified.  
This was the coat of one, a Nazarene ;  
A righteous man, I heard the captain say :  
I know not that ; I took no note—  
But may the gods receive him for his coat ! ”

## C. L. GRAVES

58.

*To Goya*

(1746-1828)

GOYA, sprung from stock plebeian,  
homely-featured, yet with gifts and claims  
Making you a Royal minion,  
friend and more than friend of noble dames.

Brawler, anarch, opportunist—  
never was a stranger medley known—  
Venting your satiric frenzy  
in the very shadow of the Throne.

## C. L. GRAVES

Gloating with a ghoul-like fancy  
on the stricken field where vultures feast,  
Or the underworld exploring  
to reveal the naked human beast.

Horror you pursued and beauty,  
till you had outlived the Psalmist's span,  
With an industry prodigious  
as your wild ungodly race you ran.

In your heart you were a rebel,  
yet, when thrones and sceptres tumbled down,  
Served with an impartial homage  
those who wore or lost or filched the Crown.

Of your brood of twenty children  
all but one in early childhood died,  
Yet your name and fame have flourished  
and the canker of the years defied.

Still mid other famous trophies  
in the halls of Strathfieldsaye we view  
Records of your stormy meetings  
with the man who won at Waterloo—

Wellington, whose haughty manners  
you, 'tis said, once threatened to chastise,  
Though in truth no other artist  
painted him in more heroic guise.

Still beside the great Velasquez  
uneclipsed your masterpieces shine,  
Steeped in an unearthly glamour  
that is neither human nor divine ;

C. L. GRAVES

Still enshrined within the Prado  
in your glowing canvases remain  
All the havoc and the splendour,  
all the charm and devilry of Spain.

I. SUTHERLAND GROOM

59. *Daughter of Jephthah*

TRIUMPHING, home he came,  
Charioted in a hero's name,  
The news, fire-spurred,  
Aroused the light-slept huntsman and goatherd,  
The very valley  
Chanted the praise of him and his war rally :  
Forgotten now  
The passionate rash vow,  
The heaven-heard  
Inviolable word  
Pledging the first to greet him to the slaughter,—  
Till, in reluctant dawn behold—his daughter !

(Ah, had he but foreseen  
The dancing girls, forcknown the tambourine,  
Forethought the waking when the dawn was  
dim,  
The new dance steps rehearsed to welcome  
him !

## I. SUTHERLAND GROOM

The dance, he knew,  
Sprang from his daughter, growing as she  
grew,  
But the wild tune  
Was old as balm, old as the Gilead moon.)

A word, and all was over :  
Even the sullen hillside drover  
Watching afar,  
Saw the eclipse of Jephthah's triumph star,  
And knew the token  
Of the fell oath though little had been spoken :  
But for two moons,  
—Most pitiful of boons—  
Meadow and valley,  
Firred summit and oak alley  
The daughter due for sacrifice was free  
To roam unfettered in sweet company.

The Gilead hills were fair,  
The terebinth and balsam there,  
The prickly oak  
Wove in the heat a green impervious cloak,  
The dawn slow stealing  
Over the hills brought more than balm for healing,  
The woods of pine  
In shadow and sunshine,  
Terebinth shade,  
And oleander glade,  
These, and the goats' bleat and the goodly sky  
And mountain waters taught her how to die.

## I. SUTHERLAND GROOM

Spectres of wayward moons  
Glancing askance at midnight noons  
    Surprise a throng  
    Of Gilead ghosts chanting a Gilead song  
By mountain water  
About the slender ghost of Jephthah's daughter :  
    There the stars hear  
    Lyrical sounds and clear,  
The shaken timbrel,  
The noted pipe and cymbal,  
    Throughout the summer nights on hills balm-clad  
    Rising above the plains of Gilead.

## THOMAS HARDY

60.

### *Weathers*

#### I

THIS is the weather the cuckoo likes,  
    And so do I ;  
When showers betumble the chestnut spikes,  
    And nestlings fly :  
And the little brown nightingale bills his best,  
And they sit outside at " The Travellers' Rest,"  
And maids come forth sprig-muslin drest,  
And citizens dream of the south and west,  
    And so do I.

#### II

This is the weather the shepherd shuns,  
    And so do I ;

THOMAS HARDY

When beeches drip in browns and duns,  
And thresh, and ply ;  
And hill-hid tides throb, throe on throe,  
And meadow rivulets overflow,  
And drops on gate-bars hang in a row,  
And rooks in families homeward go,  
And so do I.

61.

*We Field-Women*

HOW it rained  
When we worked at Flintcomb-Ash,  
And could not stand upon the hill  
Trimming swedes for the slicing-mill.  
The wet washed through us—plash, plash, plash :  
How it rained !

How it snowed  
When we crossed from Flintcomb-Ash  
To the Great Barn for drawing reed,  
Since we could nowise chop a swede.—  
Flakes in each doorway and casement-sash :  
How it snowed !

How it shone  
When we went from Flintcomb-Ash  
To start at dairywork once more  
In the laughing meads, with cows three-score,  
And pails, and songs, and love—too rash :  
How it shone !



THOMAS HARDY

62. *He never Expected Much*

[or]

*A Consideration [A Reflection] on my Eighty-sixth  
Birthday*

WELL, World, you have kept faith with me,  
Kept faith with me ;  
Upon the whole you have proved to be  
Much as you said you were.  
Since as a child I used to lie  
Upon the leaze and watch the sky,  
Never, I own, expected I  
That life would all be fair.

'Twas then you said, and since have said,  
Times since have said,  
In that mysterious voice you shed  
From clouds and hills around :  
“ Many have loved me desperately,  
Many with smooth serenity,  
While some have shown contempt of me  
Till they dropped underground.

“ I do not promise overmuch,  
Child ; overmuch ;  
Just neutral-tinted haps and such,”  
You said to minds like mine.  
Wise warning for your credit's sake!  
Which I for one failed not to take,  
And hence could stem such strain and ache  
As each year might assign.

PHYLLIS HARTNOLL

63. *The Carpenter*

SILENT at Joseph's side He stood,  
And smoothed and trimmed the shapeless  
wood,  
And with firm hand, assured and slow,  
Drove in each nail with measured blow.

Absorbed, He planned a wooden cask,  
Nor asked for any greater task,  
Content to make, with humble tools,  
Tables and little children's stools.

Lord, give me careful hands to make  
Such simple things as for Thy sake,  
Happy within Thine house to dwell  
If I make one table well.

64. *The Dancer*

WHEN this body, that I have schooled to interpret  
Each sound in motion effortless and sure,  
That rises to a pinnacle of silence,  
Seeming to pause an instant there, secure,  
Shall at the last fall from a wide-flung gesture  
Into the cold rigidity of death,  
And lie so heavily, that once was lighter  
Than thistledown that veers to every breath,  
Lay me not then in the dark earth unfriendly,  
Where never leaf shall sway nor flower nod,

## PHYLLIS HARTNOLL

And I shall slowly sink into corruption  
Under the grass my dancing feet have trod.

Take me, before my limbs are set in rigor,  
To a tall funeral pyre on some dark night,  
Where fire eats quickly through the crackling wood  
As if my speed had set the stage alight,  
And flames leap up like draperies that catch  
Their changing colours from the spotlight's glare—  
But never dance was swift as this that makes me  
One with the smoke that fades upon the air,  
A handful of ashes curtsying in the wind  
On tiptoe in some strange fantastic measure ;  
For so in death I dance to please myself  
That gave my life to dance for others' pleasure.

## CHRISTOPHER HASSALL

### 65. *A Country Parson is Thankful for Spring* (A Soliloquy)

THERE is a forest all of ebony  
that grows beneath the shining of the stars :  
no other tree, not the imperious oak,  
nor sycamore, nor plane of naked bark,  
nor winter-thriving pine, may there find place,  
for all are exiled by the jealousy  
of that one ravenous multiplying bough.  
The silent showering of atom stars  
makes great the Earth, and twelve moon-footed hours  
witness the increase of those leafy seeds

## CHRISTOPHER HASSALL

and their quick-withering prime. Meek Innocence  
lies dreaming there, while under murderous fogs  
burrows the sinning thief,—for it is Night,  
hush'd period of the gem-eyed owl, wherein,  
beneath the idle and the covering moon,  
all through the hard frost season, God prepares  
the sweet familiar miracle of Spring.  
And now I wake, and it is in the air ;  
and now I wake, and on the sparkling grass  
there lies a sheen as of a freezing fire.  
Earth has achieved, has bent the frosty bar,  
and the long icicled hours relent and thaw.  
How shyly do the hedges mention Spring  
with brown-assembling buds, sure warrant of  
the Lord's continuing good ! While near and far,  
because of mildness in the sky, the clay  
gives forth a new unspotted world, whose shoots  
and frail bloom-promises as yet are strange  
to the night-visiting beetle. This new dawn  
reveals a world too blameless and too young  
for blight and rottenness, a lust of life  
too fierce to realise the soon approach  
and watchfulness of winter. Must this time,  
this crystalline and nimble time, which now  
is cradled in the air, not last for ever,  
not scape the yellowing leaf and sharp attack  
of disappointing winds ? O how the scent  
of freshness and revolving sap mounts up,  
triumphs at every turn, spreads with the sun,  
pleasing the season's heart ! This shall inspire  
my secret prayer, that the reviving life  
within my soul, this sympathy with Nature,  
remain for ever perfect ; though the winds

## CHRISTOPHER HASSALL

chase the red leaf across the weir, and snap  
the crisp twig from the beech, and all the sky  
mourns in deep funeral black, this youngling ray  
of morning and the new-conceived year  
shall glitter in my thought. Let everything  
be thankful ; my parishioners, even those,  
lost in the unidentifying soil,  
whose place is vacant at the holy rail,  
who bide the late alarm, let them praise God,  
musing His worship while the quick bring songs.  
The dead are with us closer in the Spring ;  
though their frail bodies are but shapes of mist  
distill'd out of the ground, and their dry tongues  
softer in operation than the breeze  
puff'd on the matins leaf, who feels them not ?  
Their voices weave the colour of the grass,  
their strength is in the fervour of the earth.  
Daylight and darkness, let all things conspire  
to honour Him, man, beast, and this glad county,  
this heaven-favoured shire, hallowed with lanes  
and smoking cottages inhabited  
by simple love ; especially the Weald,  
lying so unrebellois, so serene,  
under the sway of the long-shoulder'd downs,  
her drowsy nooks and sun-rebuffing trees,  
obedient sheep together with the herds  
that crop the grass, the dew-ponds where they drink,  
their shelters, and their grazings, and their folds.  
Earth has achieved !  
What glad approach ! What festival of buds !  
Renewal of music in the eaves, return  
of the unboastful primrose, watery-eyed,  
and all the tender thrustings from the ground,

CHRISTOPHER HASSALL

because of Summer breathing in his tomb,  
because of an old promise once again  
most beautifully brought to pass, by Him  
whose hand is on the forehead of the world !

66.        *To the Australian Eucalyptus*

SOCIABLE, tremendous tree,  
how exquisitely pattern'd ! With what  
                                 grace  
your tall form sways, as to a tune,  
leaves dance, twigs interlace  
with a sweet trouble, so companionable to me !

Very beautiful, long tree,  
though every side your lovely cousins crowd  
in tapering prime, they must not fret  
that I should be allowed  
to court you with a sonnet, individually ;

for you must share it, tree,  
just as you do the varied earth and air,  
since all alike, with sister grace  
and family pride, you wear  
smooth lady-limbs of bark, rust-red and silvery.

And I have never seen  
a sight of such contentment ; though your leaves  
are dumb, it is not hard to tell  
no earthly influence grieves  
the spirit of that rich unwinterable green.

Now springs that envious pain  
of old remorse, continual regret—

## CHRISTOPHER HASSALL

How many of you cluster here  
in company, and yet,  
so different from men, in harmony remain !

O how can I transform  
the wealth of your material finery  
to treasure of the soul ? What Spring  
has fed you, giant tree,  
that you so lord the earth, regardless of the storm ?

O lead me to the mine  
where such rare stone abounds, for I would share it,  
just as you share my song. I'll risk  
the world, only to wear it,  
not on my outer boughs, but in my heart's deep shrine.

67.

### *The Arrow*

IN the forest of the air,  
Jesus, with his quiver bare,  
came upon a sturdy tree,  
lopt a branch, and it was me.

At one end he fix'd a head  
barb'd, and dipt in venom red,  
venom that could raise the dead,  
life-blood for my Safety shed.

Then he split the arrow through,  
gave it speed with feathers two ;  
nick'd and finish'd, I was stor'd  
in the quiver of the Lord.

## CHRISTOPHER HASSALL

Presently he spied the foe,  
strung me ready in his bow ;  
still I fly, and still I fly,  
flying till the day I die :

speed he gave me, and good aim ;  
may I, in my Maker's name,  
never use it to his shame,  
never from the purpose slip

of his master-marksmanship,  
never, never cease to try,  
that if the arrow fall awry  
none may blame his Archery.

## A. P. HERBERT

68.

### *My Ship*

MY ship is my delight,  
And she's the one I woo  
When in the shiny night  
We dance across the blue,  
With whispering sail and spar  
As live as ladies are,  
And twenty times as true.

My ship is my delight,  
I made her, she is mine,  
I built her trim and tight,  
I dreamed her gracious line ;



A. P. HERBERT

No wooden thing is she  
But some proud part of me ;  
I made her, she is mine.

Then at the helm I stand  
And not alone are we.  
Two lovers, hand in hand,  
We ask no company.  
So, by some lover's art  
I think she knows my heart  
And sings or sighs with me.

GERARD MANLEY HOPKINS

69. *The Windhover :*  
*to Christ our Lord*

I CAUGHT this morning morning's minion, king-  
dom of daylight's dauphin, dapple-dawn-drawn Fal-  
con, in his riding  
Of the rolling level underneath him steady air, and  
striding  
High there, how he rung upon the rein of a wimpling  
wing  
In his ecstasy ! then off, off forth on swing,  
As a skate's heel sweeps smooth on a bow-bend :  
the hurl and gliding  
Rebuffed the big wind. My heart in hiding  
Stirred for a bird,—the achieve of, the mastery of the  
thing !

GERARD MANLEY HOPKINS

Brute beauty and valour and act, oh, air, pride, plume,  
here

Buckle ! AND the fire that breaks from thee then,  
a billion

Times told lovelier, more dangerous, O my chevalier !

No wonder of it : shéer plód makes plough down  
sillion

Shine, and blue-bleak embers, ah my dear,

Fall, gall themselves, and gash gold-vermilion.

70.

*God's Grandeur*

THE world is charged with the grandeur of God.

It will flame out, like shining from shook foil ;

It gathers to a greatness, like the ooze of oil  
Crushed. Why do men then now not reckon his rod ?

Generations have trod, have trod, have trod ;

And all is seared with trade ; bleared, smeared with  
toil ;

And wears man's smudge and shares man's smell :  
the soil

Is bare now, nor can foot feel, being shod.

And for all this, nature is never spent ;

There lives the dearest freshness deep down things ;

And though the last lights off the black West went

Oh, morning, at the brown brink eastward,  
springs—

Because the Holy Ghost over the bent

World broods with warm breast and with ah !  
bright wings.

GERARD MANLEY HOPKINS

71.

*Felix Randal*

FELIX RANDAL the farrier, O he is dead then ?  
    my duty all ended,  
Who have watched his mould of man, big-boned and  
    hardy-handsome  
Pining, pining, till time when reason rambled in it and  
    some  
Fatal four disorders, fleshed there, all contended ?

Sickness broke him. Impatient he cursed at first, but  
    mended  
Being anointed and all ; though a heavenlier heart  
    began some  
Months earlier, since I had our sweet reprieve and  
    ransom  
Tendered to him. Ah well, God rest him all road  
    ever he offended !

This seeing the sick endears them to us, us too it  
    endears.  
My tongue had taught thee comfort, touch had  
    quenched thy tears,  
Thy tears that touched my heart, child, Felix, poor Felix  
    Randal ;

How far from then forethought of, all thy more  
    boisterous years,  
When thou at the random grim forge, powerful  
    amidst peers,  
Didst fettle for the great grey drayhorse his bright and  
    battering sandal !

GERARD MANLEY HOPKINS

72.

*Pied Beauty*

GLORY be to God for dappled things—  
For skies of couple-colour as a brindled cow ;  
For rose-moles all in stipple upon trout that swim ;  
Fresh-firecoal chestnut-falls ; finches' wings ;  
Landscape plotted and pieced—fold, fallow, and  
plough ;  
And áll tiádes, their gear and tackle and trim.

All things counter, original, spare, strange ;  
Whatever is fickle, freckled (who knows how ?)  
With swift, slow ; sweet, sour ; adazzle, dim ;  
He fathers-forth whose beauty is past change :  
Praise him.

73.

*Inversnaid*

THIS darksome burn, horseback brown,  
His rollrock highroad roaring down,  
In coop and in comb the fleece of his foam  
Flutes and low to the lake falls home.

A windpuff-bonnet of fáwn-fróth  
Turns and twindles over the broth  
Of a pool so pitchblack, féll-frówning,  
It rounds and rounds Despair to drowning.

Degged with dew, dappled with dew  
Are the groins of the braes that the brook treads  
through,  
Wiry heathpacks, fitches of fern,  
And the beadbonny ash that sits over the burn.

GERARD MANLEY HOPKINS

What would the world be, once bereft  
Of wet and of wildness? Let them be left,  
O let them be left, wildness and wet;  
Long live the weeds and the wilderness yet.

E. V. KNOX

74.

*The Water Zoo*

**T**O-DAY I have seen all I wish,  
For I have seen four thousand fish,  
Inscrutable and rum,  
Observing me with solemn eyes  
That hold no anger or surprise,  
In the Aquarium.

*Because they float about my brain,  
To-morrow I should like to come,  
And see four thousand fish again.*

For there are pike and trout and carp,  
And fish with faces long and sharp,  
And wrasse with their mosaic scales,  
And oblong fish that have no tails;  
Fresh-water and soft-water fellows,  
And fish with valves that work like bellows;  
And fish that leap and fish that crawl,  
And great octopodes a-sprawl,  
Inside those aqueous mysteries  
Below the Mappin Terraces;  
And golden fish with filmy skirts  
That move like Oriental flirts,

## E. V. KNOX

And rainbow-coloured fish that seem  
Like sunsets dipped into a stream,  
And silver fish with dusky bars  
That float beneath the nenuphars,  
And tiny fish of Paradise,  
And fish with furry backs, like mice,  
And fish that lay their eggs on land  
By leaping, as I understand,  
And placing them on grass, but yet  
Must splash about to keep them wet ;  
The sea-hare, which is like a slug,  
The wolf-fish with an awful mug,  
And sharks with faces mild and prim,  
Like schoolgirls, elegantly slim—  
You would not dream that underneath  
That tiny mouth had all those teeth—  
And humorous turtles that advance  
As though in some Salome dance,  
And hermit-crabs that have the sense  
To use a whelk-shell residence  
To walk about within the sea,  
Whereon there sprouts, most luckily,  
A poisonous anemone.

And there are fish that kiss and climb,  
And fish that croak, though not in rhyme,  
And sucking-fish that hang on rocks,  
And eels that give electric shocks,  
And fish that turn a rosy pink—  
From sheer false modesty, I think—  
And fish that, floating on the tide  
Transparent, show their whole inside ;  
Not ray-fish these, but, should you wish,

E. V. KNOX

They may be termed the X-ray fish ;  
And flat fish with their eyes askew,  
All buried, save those eyes, from view  
Beneath the clean white sand, until  
With rippling movements they ascend  
To eat some portion of a friend  
Thrown in by keepers from the top ;  
And fish that always seem to stop  
Lying in one place, dull as lead,  
Although you tap quite near their head ;  
And salamanders dark and dire,  
And axolotls, whose desire  
To be a salamander fills  
Their bosom with ecstatic thrills ;  
But no—the awful hand of Fate  
Prevents them from that longed-for state.  
For grow to be a salamander  
(Though striving with uncommon candour  
And patient as a nurse or aunt)  
The axolotl simply can't ;  
Because of his peculiar gland  
He may not hope to salamand ;  
His life's ambition forced to throttle,  
He still remains an axolotl.  
And there the crayfish or *langouste*  
On craggy rocks is seen to roost. . . .

*To-day I have seen all I wish,  
For I have seen four thousand fish,  
Inscrutable and rum,  
Observing me with solemn eyes  
That hold no anger or surprise,  
In the Aquarium.*

E. V. KNOX

*Because they float about my brain,  
To-morrow I should like to come  
And see four thousand fish again.*

D. H. LAWRENCE

75.

*Piano*

SOFTLY, in the dusk, a woman is singing to me ;  
Taking me back down the vista of years, till I see  
A child sitting under the piano, in the boom of the  
tingling strings  
And pressing the small, poised feet of a mother who  
smiles as she sings.

In spite of myself, the insidious mastery of song  
Betrays me back, till the heart of me weeps to belong  
To the old Sunday evenings at home, with winter out-  
side  
And hymns in the cosy parlour, the tinkling piano our  
guide.

So now it is vain for the singer to burst into clamour  
With the great black piano appassionato. The  
glamour  
Of childish days is upon me, my manhood is cast  
Down in the flood of remembrance, I weep like a  
child for the past.



D. H. LAWRENCE

76.

*Giorno dei Morti*

ALONG the avenue of cypresses,  
All in their scarlet cloaks and surplices  
Of linen, go the chanting choristers,  
The priests in gold and black, the villagers. . . .

And all along the path to the cemetery  
The round dark heads of men crowd silently,  
And black-scarved faces of womenfolk, wistfully  
Watch at the banner of death, and the mystery.

And at the foot of a grave a father stands  
With sunken head, and forgotten, folded hands ;  
And at the foot of a grave a mother kneels  
With pale shut face, nor either hears nor feels

The coming of the chanting choristers  
Between the avenue of cypresses,  
The silence of the many villagers,  
The candle-flames beside the surplices.

77.

*Baby Tortoise*

YOU know what it is to be born alone,  
Baby tortoise !

The first day to heave your feet little by little from  
the shell,  
Not yet awake,  
And remain lapsed on earth,  
Not quite alive.

D. H. LAWRENCE

A tiny, fragile, half-animate bean.

To open your tiny beak-mouth, that looks as if it  
    would never open,  
Like some iron door ;  
To lift the upper hawk-beak from the lower base  
And reach your skinny little neck  
And take your first bite at some dim bit of herbage,  
Alone, small insect,  
Tiny bright-eye,  
Slow one.

To take your first solitary bite  
And move on your slow, solitary hunt.  
Your bright, dark little eye,  
Your eye of a dark disturbed night,  
Under its slow lid, tiny baby tortoise,  
So indomitable.

No one ever heard you complain.

You draw your head forward, slowly, from your little  
    wimple  
And set forward, slow-dragging, on your four-pinned  
    toes,  
Rowing slowly forward.  
Whither away, small bird ?  
Rather like a baby working its limbs,  
Except that you make slow, ageless progress  
And a baby makes none.

The touch of sun excites you,  
And the long ages, and the lingering chill

D. H. LAWRENCE

Make you pause to yawn,  
Opening your impervious mouth,  
Suddenly beak-shaped, and very wide, like some  
    suddenly gaping pincers ;  
Soft red tongue, and hard thin gums,  
Then close the wedge of your little mountain front,  
Your face, baby tortoise.

Do you wonder at the world, as slowly you turn your  
    head in its wimple  
And look with laconic, black eyes ?  
Or is sleep coming over you again,  
The non-life ?

You are so hard to wake.

Are you able to wonder ?  
Or is it just your indomitable will and pride of the  
    first life  
Looking round  
And slowly pitching itself against the inertia  
Which had seemed invincible ?

The vast inanimate,  
And the fine brilliance of your so tiny eye,  
Challenger.  
Nay, tiny shell-bird,  
What a huge vast inanimate it is, that you must row  
    against,  
What an incalculable inertia.

Challenger,  
Little Ulysses, fore-runner,

D. H. LAWRENCE

No bigger than my thumb-nail,  
Buon viaggio.

All animate creation on your shoulder,  
Set forth, little Titan, under your battle-shield.

The ponderous, preponderate,  
Inanimate universe ;  
And you are slowly moving, pioneer, you alone.

How vivid your travelling seems now, in the troubled  
sunshine,  
Stoic, Ulyssean atom ;  
Suddenly hasty, reckless, on high toes.

Voiceless little bird,  
Resting your head half out of your wimple  
In the slow dignity of your eternal pause.  
Alone, with no sense of being alone,  
And hence six times more solitary ;  
Fulfilled of the slow passion of pitching through im-  
memorial ages  
Your little round house in the midst of chaos.

Over the garden earth,  
Small bird,  
Over the edge of all things.  
Traveller,  
With your tail tucked a little on one side  
Like a gentleman in a long-skirted coat.

All life carried on your shoulder,  
Invincible fore-runner.

D. H. LAWRENCE

78. *Song of a Man who has Come Through*

NOT I, not I, but the wind that blows through me !  
A fine wind is blowing the new direction of Time.  
If only I let it bear me, carry me, if only it carry me !  
If only I am sensitive, subtle, oh, delicate, a winged  
gift !  
If only, most lovely of all, I yield myself and am  
borrowed  
By the fine, fine wind that takes its course through the  
chaos of the world  
Like a fine, an exquisite chisel, a wedge-blade inserted ;  
If only I am keen and hard like the sheer tip of a wedge  
Driven by invisible blows,  
The rock will split, we shall come at the wonder, we  
shall find the Hesperides.

Oh, for the wonder that bubbles into my soul,  
I would be a good fountain, a good well-head,  
Would blur no whisper, spoil no expression.

What is the knocking ?  
What is the knocking at the door in the night ?  
It is somebody wants to do us harm.

No, no, it is the three strange angels.  
Admit them, admit them.

JOHN LEHMANN

79.

*This Excellent Machine*

THIS excellent machine is neatly planned,  
A child, a half-wit would not feel perplexed :  
No chance to err, you simply press the button—  
At once each cog in motion moves the next,  
The whole revolves, and anything that lives  
Is quickly sucked towards the running band,  
Where, shot between the automatic knives,  
It's guaranteed to finish dead as mutton.

This excellent machine will illustrate  
The Modern World divided into nations :  
So neatly planned, that if you merely tap it  
The armaments will start their devastations,  
And though we're for it, though we're all convinced  
Some fool will press the button soon or late,  
We stand and stare, expecting to be minced,—  
And very few are asking, *Why not scrap it?*

F. L. LUCAS

80.

*King George V—Jubilee 1935*

SINCE by the gates of school, while the rooks  
croaked chorus,

Our boyhood gaily heard proclaimed a King,  
Laughed as the yeomanry played at war before us—  
Twenty-five years ; and a world's shattering.

F. L. LUCAS

Five summers died, and we were no longer playing.  
Far down the steel-spiked line you met our eyes,  
A horseman silent amid the bugles braying,  
Where the oldest England lies.

And memory murmured—" Caesar morituri . . ."  
And the thought came—" Before the indifferent  
sight  
Of these gray barrows, scorning alike the fury  
Of the ageless winds and the whirl of man's young  
flight,  
Is *our* end come at length, like other nations' ?  
Rides the last English King on Salisbury Plain ?"  
You sat your horse. You made us no orations,  
But we heard. And you remain—

Though throne on throne has toppled, King and Kaiser,  
While hoarse throats hooted " Long live Liberty ! "  
Only to turn and trample and despise her—  
Brave world of castes and outcasts by decree !  
Though the Dictators' healing hands have bettered  
The chains of older tyrants with stronger steel,  
Yours yet the loyalties of men unfettered  
Who speak the thing they feel.

81. *Dead Bee inside a Window-pane*

(" Through a Glass Darkly ")

**S**MALL feet-folded  
All journeys done,  
Softly moulded,  
Velvet one.

F. L. LUCAS

Sleep, dark eyes,  
Gossamer wing ;  
Death likewise  
Has lost his sting.

Forager bold  
Pollen-proud,  
Fringed with gold  
Like a sunset cloud,

Now nevermore  
Shall you glide home  
To the buzzing door  
Of your honey-dome.

Brief life of toil,  
All passion missed,  
Rest you, loyal  
Communist.

Poor drudge ! and yet  
How hard you fought  
With this magic net  
Where your wings were caught !

With this power unknown  
That pinned you there,  
Rigid as stone,  
Limpid as air ;

A wizard wall  
No eye could see—  
Immeasurable  
Perplexity !



F. L. LUCAS

Till hoarse with despair  
You stabbed in vain  
The invisible snare,  
The inscrutable chain.

Lost endeavour !—  
Man or bee,  
We master never  
Our mystery.

82. *To a Queen-Anne Mirror*

UNTROUBLED and unsullied and serene  
Still, as when Marlborough fought and Anne  
was Queen,  
You watch our mad world masquerading by,  
A polished Cyclops, with your single eye,  
That looked upon the light ere Pope's keen pen  
Blinded poor Polyphemus once again,  
Bidding the wily Grecian " swift let fall  
The pointed torment on his visual ball." <sup>1</sup>  
You nought " torments ". Olympianly at ease  
Above the pageant of the centuries,  
Unvexed by memory as the ficklest heart  
That e'er made men a game and love an art,  
You have forgot blue eyes that once gazed here  
Like Dryads stooping to a sleeping mere,  
And *belles dames sans merci*, whose smiling shades  
Once on your silver flashed their gold brocades ;  
Love-lock and Cupid's bow and beauty-spot,  
Lap-dog and fan—forgot, forgot, forgot !

<sup>1</sup> Pope's *Odyssey*, ix.

F. L. LUCAS

Not mercy, but the sleep that nought will break,  
These dames have found ; those Ladies of your Lake—  
Gone ! Not a ripple. You alone awake,  
Water of Lethe, pool of transience,  
In whose clear depths the drowned soul sinks past  
    sense,  
Till in your timeless trance we seem to be  
But the dim dreams of your eternity.

83.                   *The Pipe of Peace*

(A.D. 317)

THE lines of the Lords of Tartary  
    Held Chin-yang as a net.  
Hollow-eyed the warders kept their watch,  
    Clutching the parapet,  
(For the last dog was long slain and eaten,  
    And the leanest rat a feast)  
Straining their eyes to see dust rise  
    Of succour from the east.

But over the ridges green as jade  
    That rimmed the east, instead,  
Like the round red shield of a battlefield  
    The slow moon reared her head,  
With her panther's pace and her fleshless face,  
    That is older than the dead.

But facing the moon rose Lin-Kun,  
    To Chin-yang tower climbed he.  
No sword nor spear he bore in hand,

F. L. LUCAS

No magic book, no wizard's wand ;  
Only the simple shepherd's pipe  
Men play in Tartary.

Faint on the tower betwixt the sunset  
He sat and the mounting moon,  
Yet his fingers danced as merrily as maidens,  
When meadows are blossom-strewn ;  
With a sweetness that shivered through the silver  
twilight,  
Rang out the Shepherd's Tune.

And the Tartars, as they sat beside their camp fires  
A-twinkle in a starry ring,  
And the sentries as they shouted through the starlight,  
Like wild wolves answering,  
And the captains at council in the great lords' tents—  
Camp-follower and King,  
They heard—they were hushed—they listened,  
At their hearts a sudden sting.

For the old men thought of the green grave-mounds,  
Where those they had loved were laid,  
And heavier, suddenly, on their hearts  
It seemed their harness weighed ;  
And the young saw again the bright, sad eyes  
That had watched them ride away,  
And endless ages seemed the months  
Since here their leaguer lay ;  
And the very curs pricked ragged ears  
To hear once more the strain  
That calls the Tartar flocks to fold  
Through the dusk of the Tartar plain ;

F. L. LUCAS

So the host remembered, man by man,  
The wild waste skies of Turkestan.

That night it seemed to the watchers on the wall,  
Through the dark a river flowed ;  
Till silence fell with the failing night,  
As the city's last cock crowed ;  
Slowly the white stars died away ;  
Forsaken, the camp fires smouldered grey ;  
And like a last waggon the round moon lay  
Far down the westward road.

LOUIS MACNEICE

84.

*Song*

THE sunlight on the garden  
Harden and grows cold,  
We cannot cage the minute  
Within its nets of gold ;  
When all is told  
We cannot beg for pardon.

Our freedom as free lances  
Advances towards its end ;  
The earth compels, upon it  
Sonnets and birds descend ;  
And soon, my friend,  
We shall have no time for dances.

LOUIS MACNEICE

The sky was good for flying  
Defying the church bells  
And every evil iron  
Siren and what it tells :  
The earth compels,  
We are dying, Egypt, dying

And not expecting pardon,  
Hardened in heart anew,  
But glad to have sat under  
Thunder and rain with you,  
And grateful too  
For sunlight on the garden.

85.

*Riding in Cars*

R IDING in cars  
On tilting roads  
We have left behind  
Our household gods,  
We have left behind  
The cautious clause,  
The laws of the over-  
rational mind.

Frost on the window,  
Skater's figures,  
Gunmen fingering  
Anxious triggers,  
Stocks and shares  
(The ribbon of the rich),

LOUIS MACNEICE

The favourite down  
At the blind ditch.

Forgotten now  
The early days,  
Youth's idyllic  
And dawdling ways ;  
Cruising along  
On the long road  
We do not notice  
The limping god.

Swinging between  
Crutches he comes  
To an overture  
Of buried drums ;  
His eyes will turn  
Our hands to stone,  
His name is Time,  
He walks alone.

86.

*Iceland*

NO shields now  
Cross the knoll,  
The hills are dull  
With leaden shale,  
Whose arms could squeeze  
The breath from time  
And the climb is long  
From cairn to cairn.

Houses are few  
But decorous

## LOUIS MACNEICE

In a ruined land  
    Of sphagnum moss ;  
Corrugated iron  
    Farms inherit  
The spirit and phrase  
    Of ancient sagas

Men have forgotten  
    Anger and ambush,  
To make ends meet  
    Their only business :  
The lover riding  
    In the lonely dale  
Hears the plover's  
    Single pipe

And feels perhaps  
    But undefined  
The drift of death  
    In the sombre wind  
Deflating the trim  
    Balloon of lust  
In a grey storm  
    Of dust and grit.

So we who have come  
    As trippers North  
Have minds no match  
    For this land's girth ;  
The glacier's licking  
    Tongues deride

## LOUIS MACNEICE

Our pride of life,  
Our flashy songs.

But the people themselves  
Who live here  
Ignore the brooding  
Fear, the sphinx ;  
And the radio  
With tags of tune  
Defies their pillared  
Basalt crags.

Whose ancestors  
Thought that at last  
The end would come  
To a blast of horns  
And gods would face  
The worst in fight,  
Vanish in the night  
The last, the first

Night which began  
Without device  
In ice and rocks,  
No shade or shape ;  
Grass and blood,  
The strife of life,  
Were an interlude  
Which soon must pass

And all go back  
Relapse to rock



LOUIS MACNEICE

Under the shawl  
Of the ice-caps,  
The cape which night  
Will spread to cover  
The world when the living  
Flags are furled.

87. *Now that the Shapes of Mist*

NOW that the shapes of mist like hooded beggar-  
children  
Slink quickly along the middle of the road  
And the lamps draw trails of milk in ponds of lustrous  
lead  
I am decidedly pleased not to be dead.

Or when wet roads at night reflect the clutching  
Importunate fingers of trees and windy shadows  
Lunge and flounce on the windscreen as I drive  
I am glad of the accident of being alive.

There are so many nights with stars or close-  
ly interleaved with battleship-grey or plum,  
So many visitors whose Buddha-like palms are pressed  
Against the windowpanes where people take their rest.

Whose favour now is yours to screen your sleep—  
You need not hear the strings that are tuning for the  
dawn—

Mingling, my dear, your breath with the quiet breath  
Of Sleep whom the old writers called the brother of  
Death.

CHARLES MADGE

88.

*At Watch*

HARK, the horizon-concealed hives murmuring  
Death song and life song, in whose hushed pauses  
When the waste wind halts on the seas, rolling  
Under the changeable mankind-covering clouds,  
The Roman ages and changes of fame's note  
Fill the air with awe ; in such a breathing moment  
The calm echoes the names of dying kings  
Or cloudy gladiators of the revolving ocean.  
There is no secret kept from silent things  
Absorbing, mast or tree, all thought and talk that  
float  
Mutably among the air-waves ; they're like the causes  
Of human destiny, remaining still, upstanding  
In their own perfection, lacking completely motion  
They stand, they watch : below, the crowds  
Move towards home, the sky withholding comment,  
The earth being steadfast, the seas still rolling.

89.

*Solar Creation*

THE sun, of whose terrain we creatures are,  
Is the director of all human love,  
Unit of time, and circle round the earth

And we are the commotion born of love  
And slanted rays of that illustrious star  
Peregrine of the crowded fields of birth,

## CHARLES MADGE

The crowded lanes, the market and the tower  
Like sight in pictures, real at remove,  
Such is our motion on dimensional earth.

Down by the river, where the ragged are,  
Continuous the cries and noise of birth,  
While to the muddy edge dark fishes move

And over all, like death, or sloping hill,  
Is nature, which is larger and more still.

90.

### *Fortune*

THE natural silence of a tree  
The motion of a mast upon the fresh-tossing sea  
Now foam-inclined, now to the sun with dignity

Or the stone brow of a mountain  
Regarded from a town, or the curvet fountain  
Or one street-stopped in wonder at the fountain

Or a great cloud entering the room of the sky  
Napoleon of his century  
Heard come to knowing music consciously

Such, not us, reflect and have their day  
We are but vapour of today  
Unless love's chance fall on us and call us away

As the wind takes what it can  
And blowing on the fortunate face, reveals the man.

## JOHN MASEFIELD

91.

### *Wood-Pigeons*

OFTEN the woodman scares them as he comes  
Swinging his axe to split the fallen birch :  
The keeper with his nim-nosed dog at search  
Flushes them unaware ; then the hive hums.

Then from the sheddings underneath the beech,  
Where squirrels rout, the flock of pigeons goes,  
Their wings like sticks in battle giving blows,  
The hundred hurtling to be out of reach.

Their wings flash white above a darker fan,  
In drifts the colour of the smoke they pass,  
They disappear above the valley grass,  
They re-appear against the woodland tan.

Now that the valley woodlands are all bare,  
Their flocks drift daily thus, now up, now down,  
Blue-grey against the sodden of the brown,  
Grey-blue against the twig-tips, thin in air.

It is a beauty none but autumn has,  
These drifts of blue-grey birds whom Nature binds  
Into communities of single minds,  
From early leaf-fall until Candlemas.

So in the failing Life when Death and Dread,  
With axe and mongrel, stalk the withering wood,  
The pigeons of the spirit's solitude  
Clatter to glory at the stealthy tread,

## JOHN MASEFIELD

And each, made deathless by the Spirit's joy,  
Launch from the leaves that have forgotten green,  
And from the valley seek another scene,  
That Dread can darken not, nor Death destroy.

## HUW MENAI

92.

### *Row Leisurely*

ROW leisurely thy little boat  
And whistle on thy way,  
Pausing for prayer or else to note  
The wonder of each day.

Warm thy hands by the inward sun,  
Know ghost of hope for guide—  
A phosphorescent ripple on  
The world's dark sinister tide !

Follow thou not the fool my boy  
Who strives to put so bold  
More living into life, more joy  
Or work than it will hold.

Know Vanity for a sickly weed ;  
The power of wealth despise,  
When only a penny Death will need  
To close thy sightless eyes.

Broods not the shadow of the End  
E'er here where none shall know

## HUW MENAI

The reason why we came my friend  
Or whether we shall go

Beyond the grave, which none shall miss,  
Mute master of all strife,  
Where lost the key of wedlock is  
And husband knows not wife,

Nor mother child, nor father son,  
Where dust is love and pride,  
Where they shall never more be one  
Though sleeping side by side ?

Row leisurely thy boat dear lad,  
The harbour's e'er in view,  
And thou shalt surely reach it, glad  
To sleep the long night through !

## E. H. W. MEYERSTEIN

93.

### *A Sundial*

**I** NUMBER none but hours serene ;  
The days are mine, but not the nights ;  
Over my dark-lined visage lean  
Children, amid their summer rites,  
Chasing the shadow every way,  
Till butterflies distract their play.

A pillar lifts me up to meet  
The moving message of the sun ;

E. H. W. MEYERSTEIN

My gnomon tires not ; I regret  
The dewless motes that slide and run.  
I share no Phaethon's fatal zeal ;  
Heaven strikes, but sunders not, my wheel.

I shall remain when both are dead  
Who placed me in this walk of box,  
Long after their last bloom is shed  
By the sweet-william and the phlox.  
Eternity I may not boast,  
Yet I wear out more time than most.

HAROLD MONRO

94.

*The Ocean in London*

IN London while I slowly wake  
At morning I'm amazed to hear  
The ocean, seventy miles away,  
Below my window roaring, near.

When first I know that heavy sound  
I keep my eyelids closely down,  
And sniff the brine, and hold all thought  
Reined back outside the walls of town.

So I can hardly well believe  
That those tremendous billows are  
Of iron and steel and wood and glass :  
Van, lorry, and gigantic car.

HAROLD MONRO

95.

*Midnight Lamentation*

WHEN you and I go down  
Breathless and cold,  
Our faces both worn back  
To earthly mould,  
How lonely we shall be !  
What shall we do,  
You without me,  
I without you ?

I cannot bear the thought  
You, first, may die,  
Nor of how you will weep,  
Should I.  
We are too much alone ;  
What can we do  
To make our bodies one :  
You, me ; I, you ?

We are most nearly born  
Of one same kind ;  
We have the same delight,  
The same true mind.  
Must we then part, we part ;  
Is there no way  
To keep a beating heart,  
And light of day ?

I could now rise and run  
Through street on street  
To where you are breathing—you,  
That we might meet,



## HAROLD MONRO

And that your living voice  
Might sound above  
Fear, and we two rejoice  
Within our love.

How frail the body is,  
And we are made  
As only in decay  
To lean and fade.  
I think too much of death ;  
There is a gloom  
When I can't hear your breath  
Calm in some room.

O, but how suddenly  
Either may droop ;  
Countenance be so white,  
Body stoop.  
Then there may be a place  
Where fading flowers  
Drop on a lifeless face  
Through weeping hours.

Is then nothing safe ?  
Can we not find  
Some everlasting life  
In our one mind ?  
I feel it like disgrace  
Only to understand  
Your spirit through your word,  
Or by your hand.

I cannot find a way  
Through love and through ;

## HAROLD MONRO

I cannot reach beyond  
Body, to you.  
When you or I must go  
Down evermore,  
There'll be no more to say  
—But a locked door.

## EDWIN MUIR

96.

### *Merlin*

O MERLIN in your crystal cave  
Deep in the diamond of the day,  
Will there ever be a singer  
Whose music will smooch away  
The furrow drawn by Adam's finger  
Across the meadow and the wave?  
Or a runner who'll outrun  
Man's long shadow driving on,  
Break through the gate of memory  
And hang the apple on the tree?  
Will your magic ever show  
The sleeping bride shut in her bower,  
The day wreathed in its mound of snow  
And Time locked in his tower?

97.

### *The Threefold Place*

THIS is the place. The autumn field is bare,  
The row lies half-cut all the afternoon,

EDWIN MUIR

The birds are hiding in the woods, the air  
Dreams fitfully outworn with waiting.

Soon

Out of the russet woods in amber mail  
Heroes come walking through the yellow sheaves,  
Walk on and meet. And then a silent gale  
Scatters them on the field like autumn leaves.

Yet not a feathered stalk has stirred, and all  
Is still again, but for the birds that call  
On every warrior's head and breast and shield.  
Sweet cries and horror on the field.

One field. I look again and there are three :  
One where the heroes fell to rest,  
One where birds make of iron limbs a tree,  
Helms for a nest,  
And one where grain stands up like armies drest.

98.

*The Mountains*

THE days have closed behind my back  
Since I came into these hills.  
Now memory is a single field  
One peasant tills and tills.

So far away, if I should turn  
I know I could not find  
That place again. These mountains make  
The backward gaze half-blind,

## EDWIN MUIR

Yet sharp my sight till it can catch  
The ranges rising clear  
Far in futurity's high-walled land ;  
But I am rooted here.

And do not know where lies my way,  
Backward or forward. If I could  
I'd leap Time's bound or turn and hide  
From Time in my ancestral wood.

Double delusion ! Here I'm held  
By the mystery of the rock,  
Must watch in a perpetual dream  
The horizon's gates unlock and lock,

See on the harvest fields of Time  
The mountains heaped like sheaves,  
And the valleys opening out  
Like a volume's turning leaves,

Dreaming of a peak whose height  
Will show me every hill,  
A single mountain on whose side  
Life blooms for ever and is still.

## SEAN O'CASEY

19.

### *Chorus*

From "Within the Gates"

OUR mother, the earth, is a maiden again, young,  
fair, and a maiden again.

Our mother, the earth, is a maiden again, young, fair,  
and a maiden again.

## SEAN O'CASEY

Her thoughts are a dance as she seeks out her Bridegroom, the Sun, through the lovely confusion of singing of birds, and of blossom and bud.

She feels the touch of his hand on her hair, on her cheeks, in the budding of trees,

She feels the warm kiss of his love on her mouth, on her breast, as she dances along

Through the lovely confusion of singing of birds and of blossom and bud.

Her thoughts are a dance as she seeks out her Bridegroom, the Sun, through the lovely confusion of singing of birds, and of blossom and bud.

She hears the fiercely sung song of the birds, busy building new homes in the hedge ;

She hears a challenge to life and to death as she dances along

Through the lovely confusion of singing of birds and of blossom and bud.

Her thoughts are a dance as she seeks out her Bridegroom, the Sun, through the lovely confusion of singing of birds, and of blossom and bud.

Our mother, the earth, is a maiden again, young, fair, and a maiden again ;

Our mother, the earth, is a maiden again, she's young, and is fair, and a maiden again !

### 100. *Chant of the Down-and-Outs* From "Within the Gates"

LIFE has pass'd by us to the loud roll of her drum,  
With her waving flags of yellow and green held high,

## SEAN O'CASEY

I starr'd with golden, flaming names of her most  
mighty children.

h, where shall we go when the day calls ?  
h, where shall we sleep when the night falls ?  
'e've but a sigh for a song, and a deep sigh for a  
drum-beat !

'e challenge life no more, no more, with our dead  
faith and our dead hope ;  
'e carry furled the fainting flags of a dead hope and  
a dead faith.  
ay sings no song, neither is there room for rest  
beside night in her sleeping :  
'e've but a sigh for a song, and a deep sigh for a  
drum-beat.

## WILFRED OWEN

### 11. *My Shy Hand*

MY shy hand shades a hermitage apart,  
O large enough for thee, and thy brief hours.  
Life there is sweeter held than in God's heart,  
Stillter than in the heavens of hollow flowers.

The wine is gladder there than in gold bowls.  
And Time shall not drain thence, nor trouble spill.  
Sources between my fingers feed all souls,  
Where thou mayest cool thy lips, and draw thy fill.

## WILFRED OWEN

Five cushions hath my hand, for reveries ;  
And one deep pillow for thy brow's fatigues ;  
Languor of June all winterlong, and ease  
For ever from the vain untravelled leagues.

Thither your years may gather in from storm,  
And Love, that sleepeth there, will keep thee warm.

102.

### *Insensibility*

#### I

**H**APPY are men who yet before they are killed  
Can let their veins run cold.  
Whom no compassion fleers  
Or makes their feet  
Sore on the alleys cobbled with their brothers.  
The front line withers,  
But they are troops who fade, not flowers,  
For poets' tearful fooling :  
Men, gaps for filling :  
Losses who might have fought  
Longer ; but no one bothers.

#### II

And some cease feeling  
Even themselves or for themselves.  
Dullness best solves  
The tease and doubt of shelling,  
And Chance's strange arithmetic  
Comes simpler than the reckoning of their shilling.  
They keep no check on armies' decimation.

## WILFRED OWEN

### III

Happy are these who lose imagination :  
They have enough to carry with ammunition.  
Their spirit drags no pack,  
Their old wounds save with cold can not more ache.  
Having seen all things red,  
Their eyes are rid  
Of the hurt of the colour of blood for ever.  
And terror's first constriction over,  
Their hearts remain small-drawn.  
Their senses in some scorching cautery of battle  
Now long since ironed,  
Can laugh among the dying, unconcerned.

### IV

Happy the soldier home, with not a notion  
How somewhere, every dawn, some men attack,  
And many sighs are drained.  
Happy the lad whose mind was never trained :  
His days are worth forgetting more than not.  
He sings along the march  
Which we march taciturn, because of dusk,  
The long, forlorn, relentless trend  
From larger day to huger night.

### V

We wise, who with a thought besmirch  
Blood over all our soul,  
How should we see our task  
But through his blunt and lashless eyes ?  
Alive, he is not vital overmuch ;  
Dying, not mortal overmuch ;



## WILFRED OWEN

Nor sad, nor proud,  
Nor curious at all.  
He cannot tell  
Old men's placidity from his.

### VI

But cursed are dullards whom no cannon stuns,  
That they should be as stones ;  
Wretched are they, and mean  
With paucity that never was simplicity.  
By choice they made themselves immune  
To pity and whatever moans in man  
Before the last sea and the hapless stars ;  
Whatever mourns when many leave these shores ;  
Whatever shares  
The eternal reciprocity of tears.

103.

### *Futility*

MOVE him into the sun—  
Gently its touch awoke him once,  
At home, whispering of fields unsown.  
Always it woke him, even in France,  
Until this morning and this snow.  
If anything might rouse him now  
The kind old sun will know.

Think how it wakes the seeds,—  
Woke, once, the clays of a cold star.  
Are limbs, so dear-achieved, are sides,  
Full-nerved—still warm—too hard to stir ?

## WILFRED OWEN

Was it for this the clay grew tall ?  
—O what made fatuous sunbeams toil  
To break earth's sleep at all ?

104.

### *Music*

I HAVE been urged by earnest violins  
And drunk their mellow sorrows to the slake  
Of all my sorrows and my thirsting sins.  
My heart has beaten for a brave drum's sake.  
Huge chords have wrought me mighty : I have hurled  
Thuds of God's thunder. And with old winds pondered  
Over the curse of this chaotic world,  
With low lost winds that maundered as they wandered.

I have been gay with trivial fifes that laugh ;  
And songs more sweet than possible things are sweet ;  
And gongs, and oboes. Yet I guessed not half  
Life's sympathy till I had made hearts beat,  
And touched Love's body into trembling cries,  
And blown my love's lips into laughs and sighs.

## HERBERT E. PALMER

105.

### *Prayer for Rain*

O GOD, make it rain !  
Loose the soft silver passion of the rain !  
Send swiftly from above

HERBERT E. PALMER

This clear token of Thy love.  
Make it rain !

Deck the bushes and the trees  
With the tassels of the rain.  
Make the brooks pound to the seas  
And the earth shine young again.  
God of passion, send the rain !

Oh, restore our ancient worth  
With Thy rain !  
Ease the heartache of the earth ;  
Sap the grain.  
Fill the valleys and the dales  
With Thy silver slanting gales ;  
And through England and wild Wales  
Send the rain !

Lord, restore us to Thy will  
With the rain !  
Soak the valley, drench the hill,  
Drown the stain ;  
Smite the mountain's withered hips,  
Wash the rouge from sunset's lips,  
Fill the sky with singing ships.  
Send the rain !

106.

*The Red Grouse*

I NEVER hear the red grouse yap upon a windy  
moor  
But a door goes clang in Elfinland, and I'm inside the  
door,

## HERBERT E. PALMER

I'm forty million miles away from all the wheels that  
run,  
I'm one with winds and waterfalls, and swinging to the  
sun.

For the red grouse is a wilding bird that's mightier  
than the lark,  
He's lightning to the weary heels, and drumfire in the  
dark ;  
I dread no more the tarry wheels that grind the pine-  
ward track,  
For the voice of God calls out of him, " Go back !  
Go back ! Go back ! "

The moorland is the throne of God, where iron must  
fade away,  
And there the red grouse challenges the tyrants of a  
day ;  
The cars steal up the hazel dale, there's tar on every  
track,  
But the moorland blows for bugle call, " Go back !  
Go back ! Go back ! "

The voice of God did never warn or cry a thing in vain ;  
He put the grouse on purple hills to make His meaning  
plain.  
" Come not too near ! My reign is here, though Right  
be on the rack,  
Beware ! Beware ! I'm width and air ! Go back !  
Go back ! Go back ! "

HERBERT E. PALMER

107.        *Through Curtains of Darkness*

(One for the Several)

THE voice of God came upon me through the  
darkness  
That clothed the light of the lower air,  
Stole upon me through corrupting darkness  
As I walked prideful in despair,  
Crying, "Take no heed of those who have stripped you,  
Turn your back,—and see Me.  
Though you be naked as the wind is naked  
You shall be rainbow'd with the sea.

"Though men despise you, neglect you, frustrate you,  
And remember you not in their books,  
I have written your name on the granite hills  
And the primrose banks of the brooks.  
Therefore fear not, wail not, embitter not your just  
wrath,  
Look in front and on high;  
For your songs are tangled in the lightning  
And the cedar branches of the sky.

"To some has been given honour and riches,  
Wealth of earth, strong sinew and power;  
But I have remembered my servant in the lean ditches  
Even unto this blind hour.  
Therefore rage not, chafe not, doubt not;  
You do wrong to feed your ire,  
For I have given you an old song made new,  
I have given you my heart's fire.

## HERBERT E. PALMER

“Come unto Me all ye that labour,  
Come unto Me and have rest.  
Lay your head upon my starry tabor  
And the celestial darkness of my breast.  
Lean, rest, and be rocked upon Me  
That the wind blow unto you of my ruth;  
For I set my desire upon you  
When you bit the bane of Truth.

“Truth is a poison unto the slack veins,  
And a searing wildness to the soft eyes;  
He that finds it shall be cut off,  
And his breast torn with sighs.  
For I see it not as the world sees it;  
Men fear it and flee.  
Come unto Me all ye that have seen it,  
Come unto Me.

“Now are the days of darkness upon men,  
There is no certainty in things done,  
And the moon, a buckler of desolation,  
Is a seduction unto the sun.  
The stars fight in the lunar spaces;  
The gnarled waves devour their sea.  
Come unto Me all ye that are heavy laden,  
Come unto Me.

“For he that finds Truth shall be shaken;  
Demons shall stand at his ears;  
Pride shall assail and cleave him;  
He shall be thrust through with spears.  
Therefore twist not, contort not, darken not

HERBERT E. PALMER

When you lift up your lyre ;  
For Truth was given unto the angels,  
And they are melody and fire."

RUTH PITTER

108.

*Sudden Heaven*

ALL was as it had ever been—  
The worn familiar book,  
The oak beyond the hawthorn seen,  
The misty woodland's look :

The starling perched upon the tree  
With his long tress of straw—  
When suddenly heaven blazed on me,  
And suddenly I saw :

Saw all as it would ever be,  
In bliss too great to tell ;  
For ever safe, for ever free,  
All bright with miracle :

Saw as in heaven the thorn arrayed,  
The tree beside the door ;  
And I must die—but O my shade  
Shall dwell there evermore.

109.

*Early Rising*

I AROSE early, O my true love !  
I was awake and wide

## RUTH PITTER

To see the last star quenched above  
And the moon lying on her side.

I saw the tops of the tall elms shine  
Over the mist on the lea,  
And the new bells upon the bine  
Opened most silently ;  
And in the foggy dew the kine  
Lay still as rocks in the sea.

The foggy dew lay on the flower  
Silver and soft and chaste :  
The turtle in her oaken tower  
To waken made no haste :  
Slept by her love another hour  
And her two young embraced.

Mine was the solemn silence then,  
And that clean tract of sky :  
There was no smoke from hearths of men,  
As yet no one went by :  
The beast of night had sought his den,  
The lark not climbed on high.

It was an hour of Eden ; yea,  
So still the time and slow,  
I thought the sun mistook his way,  
And was bewildered so  
That coming he might bring a day  
Lost since a thousand years ago :

A day of innocence and mirth,  
A birds' day, day of prayer,



## RUTH PITTER

When every simple tongue on earth  
A song or psalm might bear :  
When love of God was something worth,  
And holiness not killed with care.

But even while musing so, I laid  
Flame to the gathered wood :  
The sullyng smoke swept up the glade,  
Abashed the morning stood :  
And in the mead the milking-maid  
Called up the kine with accents rude.

And I was sad, O my true love,  
For the love left unsaid :  
I will sing it to the turtle-dove  
That hugs her high-built bed :  
I will say it to the solemn grove  
And to the innocent dead.

## FREDERIC PROKOSCH

110.

### *The Dolls*

I FOUND them lying on the shore,  
Sweet shapes, pearl-lipped and crescent-eyed :  
Night after night their hands implore  
Pathetic mercies at my side.

They reach into my secret night  
With pale and terrifying arms  
And offer in a dark delight  
Their subtle suicidal charms,

FREDERIC PROKOSCH

Gently they sigh into my mind  
Wild words half uttered, half unsaid,  
And when I dream of death I find  
Small tears of glass upon my bed.

They are the children of desire,  
They live on fear, they are my deep  
And buried thoughts with eyes of fire,  
They are the furies of my sleep.

111.

*The Watcher*

BLACK and still under the Siberian heaven  
Lies the lake : rise the reeds : sleep the herons  
Wings aware of the coming flight past the high  
Altai) ; and the sands still ; and not quite so still  
The slopes cut by the icier streams where shadow  
Covers the tread of the wolf, the quick nocturnal  
Drinker ; in the shadow the streams descend through  
the wood  
Now lapped in the birch's arm, now sweet with cedar :

Sweet and cool the pools in the hill, and still  
The sleeping dove beside the unloving deep.

can see veins in the dark flesh of the world,  
Warm and nervous, colour of dusk, violet.  
can hear the quick beat of the tremulous moment  
As the land turns, as the night wheels on and hovers.  
Through the weeds of China shine the strange yet  
familiar

FREDERIC PROKOSCH

Lines of a face : the gaze, the trembling wet  
Turn of the lips, the lids long parched with surrender  
Which the years turn pale, which the night, the pale  
night, covers.

I recall the sigh of the silently falling cities,  
I can hear the deer, the delicate, at the well.

JOHN PUDNEY

112. *The Moonbathers*

THE spray, upon these moon-fired beaches, fills  
The air like diamonds : and the bathers' sides,  
Warmed by the genial ochre of the moon,  
Splinter the frozen tides.

Here the quiet golden vegetation buds  
And in the shade beneath the growing fronds  
Of the convolvulus the bathers seek  
Mirrors in the ice of ponds.

HERBERT READ

113. *The Seven Sleepers*

THE seven sleepers ere they left  
the light and colour of the earth  
the seven sleepers they did cry  
(banishing their final fears) :

## HERBERT READ

“ Beauty will not ever fade.  
To our cavern we retire  
doomed to sleep ten thousand years.  
Roll the rock across the gap

Then forget us ; we are quiet :  
stiff and cold our bodies lie ;  
Earth itself shall stir ere we  
visit Earth’s mortality.

Beauty when we wake will be  
a solitude on land and sea.”

114.

### *September Fires*

**H**AULMS burn  
in distant fields.  
Reluctantly the plumes of smoke  
rise against a haze  
of hills blue and clear  
but featureless.

Our feet  
crush the crinkled beech-leaves.  
There is no other life than ours.  
God is good to us this September evening  
to give us a sun  
and a world burning its dross.

Let us burn the twisted years  
that have brought us to this meeting.

## HERBERT READ

The crops are culled—  
we can expect no other fruit  
until another year  
brings fire and fealty and the earth in barren stillness.

### 115.           *The Falcon and the Dove*

#### I

THIS high-caught hooded Reason broods upon my  
wrist,  
Fettered by a so tenuous leash of steel.  
We are bound for the myrtle marshes, many leagues  
away,  
And have a fair expectation of quarry.

#### II

Over the laggard dove, inclining to green boscage  
Hovers this intentional doom—till the unsullied sky  
receives  
A precipitation of shed feathers  
And the swifter fall of wounded wings.

#### III

Will the plain aye echo with that loud *bullallo* !  
Or retain an impress of our passage ?  
We have caught Beauty in a wild foray  
And now the falcon is hooded and comforted away.

JAMES REEVES

116.

*The Hour and the Storm*

SUMMER for England ends : simple and likeable  
This moving a clock's hands, as if saying  
' With this act we cancel formally the summer ;  
We'll have no lingering last-rose last-post sweetness  
Of breath-moist bugle flowering in the dusk.  
Winterwards turn we the face of time."

The Hour bows over me,  
Her eyes under the unfalling lashes  
Are unreproachful and unbargaining :  
She whom I always tried to elbow out  
And cried against, this creature summons me  
With how indifferent an imperiousness.  
Useless to shield the face from that command.  
Cry now, faint Human—nothing to cry unless  
' Mercifully stifle with your fast embrace  
This pitiful quivered protest or that shame,  
Hour, blot out the tremulous mouth  
That stills itself upon your heartlessness."

In the country early darkness brings the trees closer.  
Walking homeward I feel them bending over me.  
The fallen leaves startle my feet.  
Hurry on for letters and late tea.  
Soon the ground-mist covers the dying leaves.

The Storm protests the Hour :  
But too wild a tattered breast to nestle in.  
Only the wind supports ; that bitter staff  
None falls with though he cry

## JAMES REEVES

"Fall, wind, that I may fall." His cries—  
Anguish of unknown revelling, writhed rags of starved  
rebellion—  
Tear from him, whirl with leaves, the flayed trees  
Sob and shudder amidst the whelming rage.

O leaves, that the sun's fire fingered  
And the loves of birds fêted, their music multiplied,  
Wind-patterned endlessly against that blue  
And sped along the idle stream  
Where fish the frolic spun through fretted shallows :  
Are you remembered of the sapless trees—  
Their summer habit ? do you remember  
Playing in the sun ? and playing was deceit ?

Hour, who are the Hour found again,  
After the Storm's stolen interval,  
Waiting, unblown, more merciless,  
Will you forgive me if I say  
"I am not less than trees divided  
Between calm and wildness,  
Smooth-falling leaves and heart like weather  
Raging with the wind when comes  
The Storm to voice hushed cries of fate."

## MICHAEL ROBERTS

117. *Val d'Isère*

HERE is the world made real, not vision only :  
Here with the scented spruce and mountain-pink  
And the rough touch of rock  
The hills are one.

## MICHAEL ROBERTS

From the far shining peak and burning rock-rib,  
Here, in a patch of sunlight, in the pinewood,  
The streams are glacier-cold,  
And falling, talk.

Over the timeless blue, as through the mind,  
Moves, in dissolving white, the summer cloud,  
And the mind's eye is dark, and dazzled with  
The simple truth :

Living at our full compass, we were one  
With the four elements, and knew the rock,  
And the sweet smell of earth,  
And ice and fire ;

Graceful, blue Tsanteleina, beauty's pattern ;  
Granta Parei, stark meditation ; and,  
Dark as a falling breaker, fringed with foam,  
Silent, snow-corniced Sassièrè.

Here, in the velvet dusk, the mingling bells  
From the far grazing herd and the white chapel by the  
    cataract will drown  
In the last waves of sepia and violet and warm  
Wild-honey gold.

Here, in the summer night, the spirit waits  
The silence, and the beauty, and the moonlight,  
Under Mont Pourri, and the wilderness of séracs, and  
    the rock,  
And cannot sleep.



MICHAEL ROBERTS

118.           *They Will Come Back*

THEY will come back, the quiet days,  
Rosemary, myrtle, lavender,  
And spring returning, leaf by leaf,  
To the quiet heart, the single mind.

Not with the slow septennial change,  
The steady pulse, or the iron tide ;  
With the curfew dove, the quiet bell,  
It will not come, the harvest-home.

They will not come, the gentian days,  
With the cornfield white in summer, or the long  
Provençal noon, but with the autumnal storm,  
Strikes in the north, and random shots.

They will come back, the strenuous days,  
On Peteret Ridge, the Eagle Nest,  
And cross the gap of trivial time  
Sure as the wind, the night express.

Through bombs, and teargas, through the acute  
Machine-gun rattling answer, strict  
Self-knowledge, dark rebellion, death  
In the shuttered streets, through barricades,  
And doors flung open in the wind,  
They will come back.

MICHAEL ROBERTS

119.

*Hymn to the Sun*

“VOY wawm” said the dustman  
one bright August morning—  
But that was in Longbenton,  
under the trees.

He was Northumbrian, he’d never known  
horizons shimmering in the sun,  
men with swart noontide faces sleeping, thick with  
flies,  
by roadside cherry trees.

He was Northumbrian, how should he know  
mirage among blue hills,  
thin streams that tinkle silence in the still  
pulsating drone of summer—

How should he know  
how cool the darkness in the white-washed inns  
after the white road dancing, and the stones,  
and quick dry lizards, round Millevaches?

“*Fait chaud*,” as each old woman said,  
going over the hill, in Périgord,  
grim in tight bonnets, worn black dresses, and content  
with the lilt of sunlight in their bones.

120.

*Victory*

DESOLATE are the fields of standing corn,  
Lonely the twilit hills, and broken  
The oaken lintel;  
Hushed are the harrying angels.

## MICHAEL ROBERTS

Silent, their vanguard halts :  
There is no trap,  
Lonely the placid stream and sorrowing hills,  
Empty the thorp, the garth untended.

Desolate are the ways their spirit walks,  
Desolate the road toward no city ;  
For this they came ;  
The lonely islands and deserted seas.

### *Defeat*

IT was not thus we fought, nor in this city,  
With the car-lines and the houses twisted,  
And the entrails of the factory smouldering :  
It was not here.

These bodies are not ours, lying, defeated,  
Strangled by the unknown air, the drifting fumes,  
These tortured lips and flowers are not us,  
Our words were light.

These conquerors are not ours, nor these our children,  
Building new barricades in stranger towns,  
Our city dies in us, and in our eyes,  
And dies defeated.

## V. SACKVILLE-WEST

121.                    *From "The Land"*

THE country habit has me by the heart,  
For he's bewitched forever who has seen,  
Not with his eyes but with his vision, Spring

## V. SACKVILLE-WEST

Flow down the woods and stipple leaves with  
sun,

As each man knows the life that fits him best,  
The shape it makes in his soul, the tune, the tone,  
And after ranging on a tentative flight  
Stoops like the merlin to the constant lure.  
The country habit has me by the heart.  
I never hear the sheep-bells in the fold,  
Nor see the ungainly heron rise and flap  
Over the marsh, nor hear the asprous corn  
Clash, as the reapers set the sheaves in shocks  
(That like a tented army dream away  
The night beneath the moon in silvered fields),  
Nor watch the stubborn team of horse and man  
Graven upon the sky line, nor regain  
The sign-posts on the roads towards my home  
Bearing familiar names—without a strong  
Leaping of recognition ; only here  
Lies peace after uneasy truancy ;  
Here meet and marry many harmonies,  
—All harmonies being ultimately one,—  
Small mirroring majestic ; for as earth  
Rolls on her journey, so her little fields  
Ripen or sleep, and the necessities  
Of seasons match the planetary law.  
So truly stride between the earth and heaven  
Sowers of grain : so truly in the spring  
Earth's orbit swings both blood and sap to  
rhythm,  
And infinite and humble are at one ;  
So the brown hedger, through the evening lanes  
Homeward returning, sees above the ricks,  
Sickle in hand, the sickle in the sky.

## V. SACKVILLE-WEST

Shepherds and stars are quiet with the hills.  
There is a bond between the men who go  
From youth about the business of the earth,  
And the earth they serve, their cradle and their grave ;  
Stars with the seasons alter ; only he  
Who wakeful follows the pricked revolving sky,  
Turns concordant with the earth while others sleep ;  
To him the dawn is punctual ; to him  
The quarters of the year no empty name.  
A loutish life, but in the midst of dark  
Cut to a gash of beauty, as when the hawk  
Bears upwards in its talons the striking snake,  
High, and yet higher, till those two hang close,  
Sculptural on the blue, together twined,  
Exalted, deathly, silent, and alone.

And since to live men labour, only knowing  
Life's little lantern between dark and dark,  
The fieldsman in his grave humility  
Goes about his centennial concerns,  
Bread for his race and fodder for his kine,  
Mating and breeding, since he only knows  
The life he sees, how it may best endure,  
(But on his Sabbath pacifies his God,  
Blindly, though storm may wreck his urgent crops,)  
And sees no beauty in his horny life,  
With closer wisdom than soft poets use.  
But I, like him, who strive  
Closely with earth, and know her grudging mind,  
Will sing no songs of bounty, for I see  
Only the battle between man and earth,  
The sweat, the weariness, the care, the balk ;  
See earth the slave and tyrant, mutinous,

## V. SACKVILLE-WEST

Turning upon her tyrant and her slave,  
Yielding reluctantly her fruits, to none  
But most peremptory wooers.  
Wherever waste eludes man's vigilance,  
There spring the weeds and darnels ; where he treads  
Through woods a tangle nets and trips his steps ;  
His hands alone force fruitfulness and tilth ;  
Strange lovers, man and earth ! their love and hate  
Braided in mutual need ; and of their strife  
A tired contentment born.

## SIEGFRIED SASSOON

### 122.      *The Power and the Glory*

**L**ET *there be life*, said God. And what He wrought  
Went past in myriad marching lives, and brought  
This hour, this quiet room, and my small thought  
Holding invisible vastness in its hands.

*Let there be God*, say I. And what I've done  
Goes onward like the splendour of the sun  
And rises up in rapture and is one  
With the white power of conscience that commands.

*Let life be God*. . . . What wail of fiend or wraith  
Dare mock my glorious angel where he stands  
To fill my dark with fire, my heart with faith ?

SIEGFRIED SASOON

123. *The Merciful Knight*

SWIFT, in a moment's thought, our lastingness is  
wrought  
From life, the transient wing.  
Swift, in a moment's light, he mercy found, that  
knight  
Who rode alone in spring . . .  
The knight who sleeps in stone with ivy overgrown  
Knew this miraculous thing.

In a moment of the years the sun, like love through  
tears,  
Shone where the rain went by.  
In a world where armoured men made swords their  
strength and then  
Rode darkly out to die,  
One heart was there estranged ; one heart, one heart  
was changed  
While the cloud crossed the sun . . .  
Mercy from long ago, be mine that I may know  
Life's lastingness begun.

GEOFFREY SCOTT

124. *All our Joy is Enough*

ALL we make is enough  
Barely to seem  
A bee's din,  
A beetle-scheme—

GEOFFREY SCOTT

Sleepy stuff  
For God to dream :  
Begin.

All our joy is enough  
At most to fill  
A thimble cup  
A little wind puff  
Can shake, can spill :  
Fill it up ;  
Be still.

All we know is enough ;  
Though written wide,  
Small spider yet  
With tangled stride  
Will soon be off  
The page's side :  
Forget.

125.

*Boats of Cane*

A TRAVELLER once told  
How to an inland water slanting come  
Slim boats of cane from rivers of Cathay,  
With trembling mast so slight,  
It seemed God made them with a hand of air  
To sail upon His light ;  
And there  
Soft they unload a jar of jade and gold  
In the cold dawn when birds are dumb,  
And then away,  
And speak no word and seek no pay,



GEOFFREY SCOTT

Away they steal  
And leave no ripple at the keel.

So the tale is writ ;  
And now, remembering you, I think of it.

EDITH SITWELL

126.

*The Bat*

CASTELLATED, tall  
From battlements fall  
Shades on heroic  
Lonely grass,  
Where the moonlight's echoes die and pass.  
Near the rustic boorish,  
Fustian Moorish,  
Castle wall of the ultimate Shade,  
With his cloak castellated as that wall, afraid,  
The mountebank doctor,  
The old stage quack,  
Where decoy duck dust  
Began to clack,  
Watched Heliogabalusene the Bat  
In his furred cloak hang head down from the flat  
Wall, cling to what is convenient,  
Lenient.  
" If you hang upside down with squeaking shrill,  
You will see dust, lust, and the will to kill,  
And life is a matter of which way falls  
Your tufted turreted Shade near these walls.

EDITH SITWELL

For muttering guttering shadow will plan  
If you're ruined wall, or pygmy man,"  
Said Heliogabalusene, "or a pig,  
Or the empty Cæsar in tall periwig."  
And the mountebank doctor,  
The old stage quack,  
Spread out a black membraned wing of his cloak  
And his shuffling footsteps seem to choke,  
Near the Castle wall of the ultimate Shade  
Where decoy duck dust  
Quacks, clacks, afraid.

127.      *The King of China's Daughter*

THE King of China's daughter,  
She never would love me  
Though I hung my cap and bells upon  
Her nutmeg tree.  
For oranges and lemons,  
The stars in bright blue air,  
(I stole them long ago, my dear)  
Were dangling there.  
The moon did give me silver pence,  
The sun did give me gold,  
And both together softly blew  
And made my porridge cold ;  
But the King of China's daughter  
Pretended not to see  
When I hung my cap and bells upon  
Her nutmeg tree.

EDITH SITWELL

128. *The Little Ghost who Died for Love*

[Deborah Churchill, born in 1678, was hanged in 1708 for shielding her lover in a duel. His opponent was killed, her lover fled to Holland, and she was hanged in his stead, according to the law of the time. The chronicle said, "Though she died at peace with God, this malefactor could never understand the justice of her sentence, to the last moment of her life."]

"**F**EAR not, O maidens, shivering  
As bunches of the dew-drenched leaves  
In the calm moonlight . . . it is the cold sends quivering  
My voice, a little nightingale that grieves.

Now Time beats not, and dead Love is forgotten . . .  
The spirit too is dead and dank and rotten,

And I forget the moment when I ran  
Between my lover and the sworded man—  
Blinded with terror lest I lose his heart.  
The sworded man dropped, and I saw depart

Love and my lover and my life . . . he fled  
And I was strung and hung upon the tree.  
It is so cold now that my heart is dead  
And drops through time . . . night is too dark to see

Him still. . . . But it is spring ; upon the fruit-boughs  
of your lips,  
Young maids, the dew like India's splendour drips ;  
Pass by among the strawberry beds, and pluck the  
berries  
Cooled by the silver moon ; pluck boughs of cherries

EDITH SITWELL

That seem the lovely lucent coral bough  
(From streams of starry milk those branches grow)  
That Cassiopeia feeds with her faint light,  
Like Ethiopia ever jewelled bright.

Those lovely cherries do enclose  
Deep in their sweet hearts the silver snows,

And the small budding flowers upon the trees  
Are filled with sweetness like the bags of bees.

Forget my fate . . . but I, a moonlight ghost,  
Creep down the strawberry paths and seek the lost

World, the apothecary at the Fair.  
I, Deborah, in my long cloak of brown  
Like the small nightingale that dances down  
The cherried boughs, creep to the doctor's bare  
Booth . . . cold as ivy in the air,

And, where I stand, the brown and ragged light  
Holds something still beyond, hid from my sight.

Once, plumaged like the sea, his swanskin head  
Had wintry white quills . . . 'Hearken to the  
Dead . . .

I was a nightingale, but now I croak  
Like some dark harpy hidden in night's cloak,  
Upon the walls ; among the Dead, am quick ;  
Oh, give me medicine, for the world is sick ;  
Not medicines, planet-spotted like fritillaries  
For country sins and old stupidities,  
Nor potions you may give a country maid

EDITH SITWELL

When she is love-sick . . . love in earth is laid,  
Grown dead and rotten' . . . so I sank me down,  
Poor Deborah in my long cloak of brown.  
Though cockcrow marches, crying of false dawns,  
Shall bury my dark voice, yet still it mourns  
Among the ruins,—for it is not I  
But this old world, is sick and soon must die ! ”

129.      *From “The Sleeping Beauty”*

IN the great gardens, after bright spring rain,  
We find sweet innocence come once again,  
White periwinkles, little pensionnaires  
With muslin gowns and shy and candid airs,

That under saint-blue skies, with gold stars sown,  
Hide their sweet innocence by spring winds blown,  
From zephyr libertines that like Richelieu  
And d’Orsay their gold-spangled kisses blew ;

And lilies of the valley whose buds blonde and tight  
Seem curls of little school-children that light  
The priests’ procession, when on some saint’s day  
Along the country paths they make their way ;

Forget-me-nots, whose eyes of childish blue,  
Gold-starred like heaven, speak of love still true ;  
And all the flowers that we call “ dear heart,”  
Who say their prayers like children, then depart

Into the dark.    Amid the dew’s bright beams  
The summer airs, like Weber waltzes, fall

EDITH SITWELL

Round the first rose who flushed with her youth seems  
Like young Princesses dressed for their first ball :

Who knows what beauty ripens from dark mould  
After the sad wind and the winter's cold ?—  
But a small wind sighed, colder than the rose  
Blooming in desolation, "No one knows."

OSBERT SITWELL

130.

*Mary-Anne*

I

MARY-ANNE,  
Wise, simple old woman,  
Lived in a patchwork pavilion,  
Pitched on an island,  
Feeding the piebald and the tartan ducks.

Flotillas of ducks  
Lie low in the water,  
And Mary-Anne seems  
The Duck-King's daughter.  
The floating ducks crack up in their arrow-pointed  
wake  
The distorted, silent summer painted in the lake,  
And the days disappear  
In a leaden stare.

Then Mary-Anne waddles  
Through the evening cool,  
And a smell of musk

## OSBERT SITWELL

Lingers by the pool,  
For the trembling fingers of the honeysuckle  
Wring out the blue and the dew-drenched dusk.

At night the pavilion  
Is hung by a silver cord  
That the nightingales plait  
With their intercoiling song.  
Within Mary-Anne mutters  
The Word of the Lord,  
Till the candle gutters,  
As the summer sighs outside  
And taps  
At the shutters.

### II

The silver-threaded wire  
With which the nightingales  
Suspended her pavilion  
Was not the sole support it seemed :  
For there was a direct attachment,  
An umbilical cord to Heaven.  
Her webfooted world  
Teemed with four-leafed clovers,  
With tea-leaves, cards, new moons,  
And every sort of augury.  
For was she not  
The Seventh Child of a Seventh Child  
Born under Venus,  
Had she not seen the Blue Man ride  
Away, the bleak night that the late lord died ?  
Not frightened, never in the least,

## OSBERT SITWELL

But seeing things,  
Constantly.

Opposite on the shore  
Was the Cedar Avenue,  
Where fallen fragrance hushed the footsteps,  
And there,  
Quite often of an evening,  
Mary-Anne could see  
The Cavalier lord walking,  
More conventional in death than in life ever,  
Carrying his handsome head beneath an out-turned arm.  
It was he who had done all this for Mary-Anne,  
Who had made the lake and given it countless  
things to mirror ;  
Who had made the broken flights of steps,  
The balustrades, the floating-terraces  
And colonnades, wherein Italian winds  
Whispered and sang their arias—  
Winds that he had netted centuries ago  
In the plumed grottoes of a Roman garden—  
And statues that the years had fretted  
To limbless, eyeless, lipless lepers.  
It was he, too, who had planted the park with hawthorns  
That prance like red and white chessmen  
Through the chequered springtime.

### III

In the winter her pavilion  
Was a tent of swansdown.  
The windows tightly closed  
Showed through their brittle yellow ice



## OSBERT SITWELL

A fern, and cubèd walls.  
The wild geese thrust their long necks  
Out into the cold air above,  
And the white feathers drifted up to the window.  
Then the Family would come down,  
Like so many cats after the birds, she always said.  
The snowflakes would sway down  
And thud,  
                  thud,  
                  thud  
                  would sound the falling pheasants.

### 131.                   *Mrs. Southern's Enemy*

**E**VEN as the shadows of the statues lengthen,  
While, when the glowing glass below is broken,  
The plunging images are shaken,  
For the young, blue-wingèd god is woken,  
Sighs, stretches, shivers, till his muscles strengthen  
So he can trample down the flowers, forsaken  
By their droning, golden-liveried lovers, tumble  
Among them till their red mouths tremble,  
Already in the ancient house, whose shadow dies  
With the slow opening of its hundred eyes,  
Already, even then, Night the Black Panther  
Is slinking, creeping down the corridors,  
Lithe-swinging on her velvet paws,  
Sharpening her treacherous claws  
To frighten children.

And then it is  
                  I seem to see again  
That grey typhoon we knew as Mrs. Southern,

## OSBERT SITWELL

Spinning along the darkened passages,  
Watching things, tugging things,  
Seeing to things,  
And putting things to rights.

Oh, would that the cruel daylight, too,  
Could give us back again  
Dear Mrs. Southern,  
Dear selfless, blue-lipped Mrs. Southern,  
Cross, mumbling and transparent Mrs. Southern,  
With her grey hair,  
Grey face,  
And thinly-bitter smile,  
In wide blue skirt, white-spotted, and white apron ;  
On the very top of her head she carried a cap,  
An emblem of respect and respectability, while  
As though she were a Hindu charmer of snakes,  
Her hair lay coiled and tame at the back of her head.  
But her actual majesty was really the golden glory,  
Through which she moved, a hurrying fly  
Enshrined in rolling amber,  
As she spun along in a twisting column of golden  
atoms,  
A halo of gold motes above and about her,  
A column of visible, virtuous activity.  
Her life was a span of hopeless conflict,  
For she battled against Time,  
That never-vanquished and invisible foe,  
She did not recognise her enemy,  
She thought him Dust :  
But what is Dust,  
Save Time's most lethal weapon,  
His faithful ally and our sneaking foe,

## OSBERT SITWELL

Through whom Time steals and covers all we know,  
The very instrument through whom he overcame  
Great Nineveh and Rome and Carthage,  
Ophir and Trebizond and Ephesus,  
Now deep, all deep, so deep in dust ?

Even the lean and arid archæologist,  
Who bends above the stones, and peers and  
ponders,  
Will be his, too, one day.

Dust loads the dice,  
Then challenges to play,  
Each layer of dust upon a chair or table  
A tablet to his future victory.  
And Dust is cruel, no victory despising,  
However slight,  
And Dust is greedy, eats the very bones ;  
So that, in the end, still not content  
With trophies such as Helen of Troy,  
Or with the conquering golden flesh of Cleopatra  
(She, perhaps, understood the age-long battle,  
For did she not prefer to watch her pearl  
Dissolve in amber wine,  
Thus herself enjoying  
Its ultimate disintegration,  
Than let Dust conquer such a thing of beauty ?  
Was not the asp, fruit-hidden,  
The symbol of such understanding ?),  
He needs must seize on Mrs. Southern,  
Poor mumbling, struggling, blue-lipped Mrs.  
Southern,  
For Dust is insatiate and invincible.

STEPHEN SPENDER

132. *Beethoven's Death Mask*

I IMAGINE him still with heavy brow.  
Huge, black, with bent head and falling hair  
He ploughs the landscape. His face  
Is this hanging mask transfigured,  
This mask of death which the white lights make stare.

I see the thick hands clasped ; the scare-crow coat ;  
The light strike upwards at the holes for eyes ;  
The beast squat in that mouth, whose opening is  
The hollow opening of an organ pipe :  
There the wind sings and the harsh longing cries.

He moves across my vision like a ship.  
What else is iron but he ? The fields divide  
And, heaving, are changing waters of the sea.  
He is prisoned, masked, shut off from being ;  
Life like a fountain he sees leap—outside.

Yet, in that head there twists the roaring cloud  
And coils, as in a shell, the roaring wave.  
The damp leaves whisper ; bending to the rain  
The April rises in him, chokes his lungs  
And climbs the torturing passage of his brain.

Then the drums move away, the Distance shows ;  
Now cloudy peaks are bared ; the mystic One  
Horizons haze, as the blue incense heaven.  
Peace, peace . . . Then splitting skull and dream, there  
comes,  
Blotting our lights, the trumpeter, the sun.

STEPHEN SPENDER

133.

*I Think Continually*

I THINK continually of those who were truly great.  
Who, from the womb, remembered the soul's  
history

Through corridors of light where the hours are suns  
Endless and singing. Whose lovely ambition  
Was that their lips, still touched with fire,  
Should tell of the Spirit clothed from head to foot in  
song.

And who hoarded from the Spring branches  
The desires falling across their bodies like blossoms.

What is precious is never to forget  
The essential delight of the blood drawn from ageless  
springs  
Breaking through rocks in worlds before our earth.  
Never to deny its pleasure in the morning simple light  
Nor its grave evening demand for love.  
Never to allow gradually the traffic to smother  
With noise and fog the flowering of the spirit.

Near the snow, near the sun, in the highest fields  
See how these names are fêted by the waving grass  
And by the streamers of white cloud  
And whispers of wind in the listening sky.  
The names of those who in their lives fought for life  
Who wore at their hearts the fire's centre.  
Born of the sun they travelled a short while towards  
the sun,  
And left the vivid air signed with their honour.

STEPHEN SPENDER

134.

*My Parents*

MY parents kept me from children who were rough  
And who threw words like stones and who wore  
torn clothes.

Their thighs showed through rags. They ran in the  
street

And climbed cliffs and stripped by the country streams.

I feared more than tigers their muscles like iron  
And their jerking hands and their knees tight on my  
arms.

I feared the salt coarse pointing of those boys  
Who copied my lisp behind me on the road.

They were lithe, they sprang out behind hedges  
Like dogs to bark at our world. They threw mud  
And I looked another way, pretending to smile.  
I longed to forgive them, yet they never smiled.

135.

*The Express*

AFTER the first powerful plain manifesto  
The black statement of pistons, without more fuss  
But gliding like a queen, she leaves the station.  
Without bowing and with restrained unconcern  
She passes the houses which humbly crowd outside,  
The gasworks and at last the heavy page  
Of death, printed by gravestones in the cemetery.  
Beyond the town there lies the open country  
Where, gathering speed, she acquires mystery,  
The luminous self-possession of ships on ocean.

## STEPHEN SPENDER

It is now she begins to sing—at first quite low  
Then loud, and at last with a jazzy madness—  
The song of her whistle screaming at curves,  
Of deafening tunnels, brakes, innumerable bolts.  
And always light, aerial, underneath  
Goes the elate metre of her wheels.  
Steaming through metal landscape on her lines  
She plunges new eras of wild happiness  
Where speed throws up strange shapes, broad curves  
And parallels clean like the steel of guns.  
At last, further than Edinburgh or Rome,  
Beyond the crest of the world, she reaches night  
Where only a low streamline brightness  
Of phosphorus on the tossing hills is white.  
Ah, like a comet through flame, she moves entranced  
Wrapt in her music no bird song, no, nor bough  
Breaking with honey buds, shall ever equal.

### 136. *The Pylons*

THE secret of these hills was stone, and cottages  
Of that stone made,  
And crumbling roads  
That turned on sudden hidden villages.

Now over these small hills they have built the concrete  
That trails black wire :  
Pylons, those pillars  
Bare like nude, giant girls that have no secret.

The valley with its gilt and evening look  
And the green chestnut

## STEPHEN SPENDER

Of customary root  
Are mocked dry like the parched bed of a brook.

But far above and far as sight endures  
Like whips of anger  
With lightning's danger  
There runs the quick perspective of the future.

This dwarfs our emerald country by its trek  
So tall with prophecy :  
Dreaming of cities  
Where often clouds shall lean their swan-white neck.

## L. A. G. STRONG

137.

### *The Mad-Woman*

ASWELL within her billowed skirts  
Like a great ship with sails unfurled,  
The mad-woman goes gallantly  
Upon the ridges of her world.

With eagle nose and wisps of gray  
She strides upon the westward hills,  
Swings her umbrella joyously  
And waves it to the waving mills,

Talking and chuckling as she goes  
Indifferent both to sun and rain,  
With all that merry company  
The singing children of her brain.



JAN STRUTHER

138.

*The Blunder*

SOME god, quite irresponsible and young,  
Has jumbled time and place and dealt amiss :  
A day of Grecian spring-time he has flung  
Into this winter-bound Metropolis.  
O blessèd blunderer ! To-day the air  
Is blue as the Aegean, soft as wine,  
And there are Tritons in Trafalgar Square  
And white-limbed Naiads in the Serpentine.  
To-day great Centaurs gallop down the Row ;  
Hyde Park's a silver mist of olive-trees ;  
And all the costers' barrows overflow  
With golden apples from the Hesperides.  
Hide, careless god ! There'll be, without a doubt,  
Hades to pay in heaven when Zeus finds out !

139.

*London Lovers*

COUNTRY lovers play at love  
In a scene all laid for loving.  
Marriage-making stars above  
Gossip and wink and look approving,  
While the moon with maudlin beam  
Gilds the sentimental air,  
And lends the glamour of a dream  
To eye and hand, to lip and hair ;  
Long dewy lanes invite the feet  
And all the silver dusk is sweet  
With unimaginable roses ;

## JAN STRUTHER

And round the heart enchantment closes,  
And the whole world's a lovers' tale  
Spun by the moon and the nightingale.

*O love's a simple word to say  
With nature aiding and abetting ;  
And love's an easy part to play  
On such a stage, in such a setting.*

London lovers lack the aid  
Of such poetic properties :  
In uninspiring streets are played  
Their love-scenes and their ecstasies.  
They are not coached by moon or star  
Or prompted by the nightingale ;  
On Shepherd's Bush no roses are ;  
There lies no dew in Máida Vale.  
London lovers see instead  
Electric sky-signs overhead,  
Jarring upon romantic mood  
With eulogies of patent food.  
For them no peace when twilight falls,  
Only the noise of busy places,  
The drabness of a thousand walls,  
The staring of a thousand faces.  
Yet London man to London maid  
Makes his undaunted serenade :  
Enraptured and oblivious  
He woos her—on a motor-bus.

*O proudly down each thoroughfare  
Go London lovers two by two :  
For London love is staunch and rare*

JAN STRUTHER

*And brave and difficult and true ;  
And seven times sweet is each caress  
Snatched from a world of ugliness.*

DOROTHY MARGARET STUART

140. *Nine Men's Morrice*

(1655)

OUR maypole with much labour  
Is now in faggots hewn ;  
No more to pipe and tabor,  
With bells upon their shoon,  
The lads dance round on Mayday, and wag green  
boughs on Mayday,  
To Sellinger his tune.

They may not leap or wrestle ;  
No quintain swings to-day ;  
No mummer sets a trestle  
Upon the green to play ;  
But we play nine men's morrice, we *will* play nine  
men's morrice,  
Though NOLL himself say Nay.

The turf is smoothly shaven  
As it was wont to be ;  
The squares are trimly graven ;  
The stones are three times three ;  
And there we elders set them and take them up  
and set them,  
Each kneeling on his knee.

DOROTHY MARGARET STUART

The youngsters go to sermon  
For lack of better sport,  
But we old men determine  
That, since our time be short,  
We'll have our good old pastime—it was a courtly  
pastime  
When England *had* a Court.

We have no pretty posies  
Against out belts of buff,  
Upon our shoes no roses,  
No lace on coat or cuff;  
But we three old companions will play *like* old  
companions,  
Let NOLL speak ne'er so gruff.

Some Puritan new-shavèd  
May o'er the box-hedge peep;  
Then with a psalm of DAVID  
We sing his doubts to sleep,  
And gravely move our pieces, and lift and shift our  
pieces,  
All chanting loud and deep.

And, if that whey-faced brother  
Stand glooming for a spell,  
We talk to one another  
O' the Kings of Israel,  
Or rail at Squire and Parson, and swear that Squire  
and Parson  
Were worshippers of Bel.

DOROTHY MARGARET STUART

Now Heaven grant, good neighbours,  
That maypoles rise again,  
That fiddles, pipes and tabors  
Take up their old refrain,  
And that KING CHARLES win homeward, ah ! when  
KING CHARLES wins homeward  
The fiddlers will be fain.

A. S. J. TESSIMOND

141. *Cats no less Liquid than their Shadows*

CATS, no less liquid than their shadows,  
Offer no angles to the wind.  
They slip, diminished, neat, through loopholes  
Less than themselves ; will not be pinned

To rules or routes for journeys ; counter  
Attack with non-resistance ; twist  
Enticing through the curving fingers  
And leave an angered, empty fist.

They wait, obsequious as darkness,  
Quick to retire, quick to return ;  
Admit no aim or ethics ; flatter  
With reservations ; will not learn

To answer to their names ; are seldom  
Truly owned till shot and skinned.  
Cats, no less liquid than their shadows,  
Offer no angles to the wind.

A. S. J. TESSIMOND

142. *Epitaph on a Disturber of his Times*

WE expected the violin's finger on the upturned  
nerve ;

Its importunate cry, too laxly curved :  
And you drew us an oboe-outline, clean and acute ;  
Unadorned statement, accurately carved.

We expected the screen, the background for reverie  
Which cloudforms usefully weave :  
And you built the immaculate, adamant, blue-green  
steel  
Arch of a balanced wave.

We expected a pool with flowers to diffuse and break  
The child-round face of the mirrored moon :  
And you blazed a rock-path, begun near the sun, to be  
finished  
By the trained and intrepid feet of men.

DYLAN THOMAS

143. *Poem in October*

ESPECIALLY when the October wind  
With frosty fingers punishes my hair,  
Caught by the crabbing sun I walk on fire  
And cast a shadow crab upon the land,  
By the sea's side, hearing the noise of birds,  
Hearing the raven cough in winter sticks,  
My busy heart who shudders as she talks  
Sheds the syllabic blood and drains her words.

## DYLAN THOMAS

Shut, too, in a tower of words, I mark  
On the horizon walking like the trees  
The wordy shapes of women, and the rows  
Of the star-gestured children in the park.  
Some let me make you of the vowelled beeches,  
Some of the oaken voices, from the roots  
Of many a thorny shire tell you notes,  
Some let me make you of the water's speeches.

Behind a pot of ferns the wagging clock  
Tells me the hour's word, the neural meaning  
Flies on the shafted disc, declaims the morning  
And tells the windy weather in the cock.  
Some let me make you of the meadow's signs ;  
The signal grass that tells me all I know  
Breaks with the wormy winter through the eye.  
Some let me spell you of the raven's sins.

Especially when the October wind  
(Some let me make you of autumnal vowels,  
The spider-tongued, and the loud hill of Wales)  
With fist of turnips punishes the land,  
Some let me make you of the heartless words.  
The heart is drained that, spelling in the scurry  
Of chemic blood, warned of the coming fury.  
By the sea's side hear the dark-vowelled birds.

144.

### *We Lying by Seasand*

WE lying by seasand, watching yellow  
And the grave sea, mock who deride  
Who follow the red rivers, hollow  
Alcove of words out of cicada shade,

## DYLAN THOMAS

For in this yellow grave of sand and sea  
A calling for colour calls with the wind  
That's grave and gay as grave and sea  
Sleeping on either hand.  
The lunar silences, the silent tide  
Lapping the still canals, the dry tide-master  
Ribbed between desert and water storm,  
Should cure our ills of the water  
With a one-coloured calm ;  
The heavenly music over the sand  
Sounds with the grains as they hurry  
Hiding the golden mountains and mansions  
Of the grave, gay seaside land.  
Bound by a sovereign strip, we lie,  
Watch yellow, wish for wind to blow away  
The strata of the shore and leave red rock ;  
But wishes breed not, neither  
Can we fend off the rock arrival,  
Lie watching yellow until the golden weather  
Breaks, O my heart's blood, like a heart and hill.

## W. J. TURNER

145.

### *Nostalgia*

AS one goes on  
It becomes increasingly dark,  
The summers are darker-leafed,  
The springs rain-clouded,  
The days and nights lie closer together,  
The years are swept away like husks.



W. J. TURNER

It is raining everywhere.

When the sun shines it is like a ghost returning,  
Everywhere there are umbrellas ;  
Nobody heeds that pale recollection  
Gliding over their heads.

In the days of my youth it came as an enchanter,  
Everybody threw their hats into the sky,  
The flowers burst into colour  
The hills rose billowing in green pavilions  
The streams ran glittering crystal  
The birds carolled gambolling in the air !

I pull my hat over my eyes  
The rain is come for ever  
For ever and ever.

JAMES WALKER

146.                   *World without End*

BEYOND these walls I feel  
The serpent night uncurl  
Its myriad coils of darkness as it crawls  
Close, close, on twilight's heel ;  
I hear beyond these walls  
Wind like a demon wail,  
Wind like a great bat hurl  
Against the stone and fail  
To find a lodging there ;

## JAMES WALKER

Beyond these walls I know  
For mile on jagged mile  
The ling-scarred mountains roll  
Wild, dark, inatable.

And out within their folds  
The Wrath undreamed-of preys  
That has bided and lain low  
Through aeons of nights and days :  
Each rumbling blast that shook  
The crystal sky is known,  
For every leaf-light shock  
Of human foot set down  
Upon this pristine rock  
Late, soon, man must atone—  
For earth at last shall tire  
Of man, her darling guest,  
And time spin back this star  
To chaos with the rest.

## REX WARNER

147.

### *Chough*

DESOLATE that cry as though world were  
unworthy.

See now, rounding the headland, a forlorn hopeless  
bird,

trembling black wings fingering the blowy air,  
dainty and ghostly, careless of the scattering salt.

## REX WARNER

This is the cave-dweller that flies like a butterfly,  
buffeted by daws, almost extinct, who has chosen,  
so gentle a bird, to live on furious coasts.

Here where sea whistles in funnels, and slaps the back  
of burly granite slabs, and hisses over holes,  
in bellowing hollows that shelter the female seal  
the Cornish chough wavers over the waves.

By lion rocks, rocks like the heads of queens,  
sailing with ragged plumes upturned, into the wind  
goes delicate indifferent the doomed bird.

148.

### *Dipper*

URBANE, rotund, secretive, dashing dipper,  
O daintier and gentler than the aldermen  
we know in our life, bowing not to a Highness  
but to wealth of running water in shine or shower,  
the gliding race shaken into shiver of foam below your  
feet.

Dapper you go, stout, bowing at the edge of cascades,  
neat, melancholy bird.

Sometimes in unruffled water, scrabbling with your toes  
for gravel, down you dive, and stride along the bottom,  
keeping the land's conventions even in liquid.

Low-flying, even in air to earth and water true,  
you dash through mossy grooves, olive tunnels of shade,  
shy haunter of broken water, faithful to home  
where screened by snowy smoke of falls in nook you  
nest.

REX WARNER

149.

*Mallard*

SQUAWKING they rise from reeds into the sun,  
climbing like furies, running on blood and bone,  
with wings like garden shears clipping the misty air,  
four mallard, hard winged, with necks like rods  
fly in perfect formation over the marsh.

Keeping their distance, gyring, not letting slip the air,  
but leaping into it straight like hounds or divers,  
they stretch out into the wind and sound their horns  
again.

Suddenly siding to a bank of air unbidden  
by hand signal or morse message of command  
downsky they plane, sliding like corks on a current,  
designed so deftly that all air is advantage,

till, with few flaps, orderly as they left earth,  
alighting among curlew they pad on mud.

DOROTHY WELLESLEY

150.

*Lenin*

(February 1927)

IT was night when I saw Lenin,  
The Red Square dark but for snow.  
Kremlin walls invisible, only the tower  
Merged to light at the top. There, light flung upward

## DOROTHY WELLESLEY

From a lantern unseen thiew its glow  
On a flag, which flew on the sky,  
As colours turn in the dark,  
A curious unnatural scarlet.

I went through the door to Lenin.  
Each side of the door  
Were stationed, like figures from Noah's Ark,  
Two sentries, their skirts hooping out  
To a mass of solidity round their feet for the cold :  
Wooden toys set firm on the base.  
And I smiled as I passed through the door.

So I came down the steps to Lenin.  
With a herd of peasants before  
And behind me, I saw  
A room stained scarlet, and there  
A small wax man in a small glass case.  
Two sentinels at his feet, and one at his head  
Two little hands on his breast :  
Pious spinster asleep ; and I said  
" Many warrants these delicate hands have signed."  
A lamp shone, red,  
An aureole over him, on his red hair ;  
His uniform clothed him still.

Greedy of detail I saw,  
In those two minutes allowed,  
The man was not wax, as they said,  
But a corpse, for a thumb nail was black,  
The thing was Lenin.

Then a woman beside me cried  
With a strange voice, foreign, loud.

## DOROTHY WELLESLEY

And I, who fear not life nor death, and those who have  
died

Only a little, was inwardly shaken with fear,  
For I stood in the presence of God ;  
The voice I heard was the voice of all generations  
Acclaiming new faiths, horrible, beautiful faiths ;  
I knew that the woman wailed as women wailed long  
ago

For Christ in the sepulchre laid.  
Christ was a wax man too,  
When they carried Him down to the grave.

Christ came not to save,  
Christ was terrible too,  
He brought not peace but a sword.

Then I knew that I too should wail with the peasant  
women,  
Not for Lenin, not for our Lord,  
But wail in my heart for the fireside personal gods :  
For Apollo, who leaned on the lintels of farms, in the  
evening light,  
Begging a flagon of wine. Or, for her,  
Aphrodite Anodymene,  
White in her shell.

Where goeth man ? This I know :  
It was night when I saw Lenin,  
The Red Square dark but for snow.

LAURENCE WHISTLER

151.

*The Glass Chandelier*

THE fire upon the books  
Lifts its hurried looks :  
It reads by tiny flames  
The sad and golden names.  
The wind at the window bars  
Troubles the glass of stars.  
The stars in the window pane  
Alter like rain.

Fire, wind and star  
Much in movement are.  
Flesh of man the same—  
Flash as star and flame  
And faring like the wind  
Now crowned with stars, now blind.  
But wind cannot force,  
Nor star to any course,  
Though fire all night must show  
The glass chandelier—  
Like a larch in snow,  
And a saint in air,  
Or a very still lady.  
A kind of beauty  
Too near the look of death,  
Too still, for us whose breath  
Is troubled with desire  
And brief as wind and fire.

## HUMBERT WOLFE

152.

### *The Painted Flower*

NOT the flower itself but the thought  
of your flower that I have made  
I have brought.  
In their brief masquerade  
men and the heather  
put on the dominoes  
of flesh and the blade's green feather.  
And those  
before the owl has cried  
are laid aside.

But here, time overthrown,  
green flame and bloom's white spark  
disown  
the slow atomic dark.  
Division and the grief  
of dust will not prevail  
on bud or leaf  
nor overset the pale  
but mandatory power  
of an imagined flower.

The Indian conjurer  
makes a bush with two passes  
grow quicklier  
than under sun the jungle grasses—  
in momentary magic. This  
is not such : having no mortal part  
nor weaknesses.



HUMBERT WOLFE

And the old fowler of the heart  
can use a blossom as lime  
to snare the wings of time.

W. B. YEATS

153.

*Byzantium*

THE unpurged images of day recede ;  
The Emperor's drunken soldiery are abed ;  
Night resonance recedes, night-walkers' song  
After great cathedral gong ;  
A starlit or a moonlit dome disdains  
All that man is,  
All mere complexities,  
The fury and the mire of human veins.

Before me floats an image, man or shade,  
Shade more than man, more image than a shade ;  
For Hades' bobbin bound in mummy-cloth  
May unwind the winding path ;  
A mouth that has no moisture and no breath  
Breathless mouths may summon ;  
I hail the superhuman ;  
I call it death-in-life and life-in-death.

Miracle, bird or golden handiwork,  
More miracle than bird or handiwork,  
Planted on the star-lit golden bough,  
Can like the cocks of Hades crow,  
Or, by the moon embittered, scorn aloud

W. B. YEATS

In glory of changeless metal  
Common bird or petal  
And all complexities of mire or blood.

At midnight on the Emperor's pavement flit  
Flames that no faggot feeds, nor steel has lit,  
Nor storm disturbs, flames begotten of flame,  
Where blood-begotten spirits come  
And all complexities of fury leave,  
Dying into a dance,  
An agony of trance,  
An agony of flame that cannot singe a sleeve.

Astraddle on the dolphin's mire and blood,  
Spirit after spirit ! The smithies break the flood,  
The golden smithies of the Emperor !  
Marbles of the dancing floor  
Break bitter furies of complexity,  
Those images that yet  
Fresh images beget,  
That dolphin-torn, that gong-tormented sea.

154.

*Coole and Ballylee, 1931*

UNDER my window-ledge the waters race,  
Otters below and moor-hens on the top,  
Run for a mile undimmed in Heaven's face  
Then darkening through 'dark' Raftery's 'cellar'  
drop,  
Run underground, rise in a rocky place  
In Coole demesne, and there to finish up

W. B YEATS

Spread to a lake and drop into a hole.  
What's water but the generated soul ?

Upon the border of that lake's a wood  
Now all dry sticks under a wintry sun,  
And in a copse of beeches there I stood,  
For Nature's pulled her tragic buskin on  
And all the rant's a mirror of my mood :  
At sudden thunder of the mounting swan  
I turned about and looked where branches break  
The glittering reaches of the flooded lake.

Another emblem there ! That stormy white  
But seems a concentration of the sky ;  
And, like the soul, it sails into the sight  
And in the morning's gone, no man knows why ;  
And is so lovely that it sets to right  
What knowledge or its lack had set awry,  
So arrogantly pure, a child might think  
It can be murdered with a spot of ink.

Sound of a stick upon the floor, a sound  
From somebody that toils from chair to chair ;  
Beloved books that famous hands have bound,  
Old marble heads, old pictures everywhere ;  
Great rooms where travelled men and children found  
Content or joy ; a last inheritor  
Where none has reigned that lacked a name and fame  
Or out of folly into folly came.

A spot whereon the founders lived and died  
Seemed once more dear than life ; ancestral trees,  
Or gardens rich in memory glorified

W. B. YEATS

Marriages, alliances and families,  
And every bride's ambition satisfied.  
Where fashion or mere fantasy decrees  
Man shifts about—all that great glory spent—  
Like some poor Arab tribesman and his tent.

We were the last romantics—chose for theme  
Traditional sanctity and loveliness ;  
Whatever's written in what poets name  
The book of the people ; whatever most can bless  
The mind of man or elevate a rhyme ;  
But all is changed, that high horse riderless,  
Though mounted in that saddle Homer rode  
Where the swan drifts upon a darkening flood.

155.

*For Anne Gregory*

“NEVER shall a young man,  
    Thrown into despair  
By those great honey-coloured  
Ramparts at your ear,  
Love you for yourself alone  
And not your yellow hair.”

“ But I can get a hair-dye  
And set such colour there,  
Brown, or black, or carrot,  
That young men in despair  
May love me for myself alone  
And not my yellow hair.”

“ I heard an old religious man  
But yesternight declare

W. B. YEATS

That he had found a text to prove  
That only God, my dear,  
Could love you for yourself alone  
And not your yellow hair."

156.

*A Prayer for Old Age*

GOD guard me from those thoughts men  
think

In the mind alone ;  
He that sings a lasting song  
Thinks in a marrow-bone ;

From all that makes a wise old man  
That can be praised of all ;  
O what am I that I should not seem  
For the song's sake a fool ?

I pray—for fashion's word is out  
And prayer comes round again—  
That I may seem, though I die old,  
A foolish, passionate man.

157.

*Sailing to Byzantium*

I

THAT is no country for old men. The young  
In one another's arms, birds in the trees,  
—Those dying generations—at their song,  
The salmon-falls, the mackerel-crowded seas,  
Fish, flesh, or fowl, commend all summer long

## W. B. YEATS

Whatever is begotten, born, and dies.  
Caught in that sensual music all neglect  
Monuments of unageing intellect.

### II

An aged man is but a paltry thing,  
A tattered coat upon a stick, unless  
Soul clap its hands and sing, and louder sing  
For every tatter in its mortal dress,  
Nor is there singing school but studying  
Monuments of its own magnificence ;  
And therefore I have sailed the seas and come  
To the holy city of Byzantium.

### III

O sages standing in God's holy fire  
As in the gold mosaic of a wall,  
Come from the holy fire, perne in a gyre,  
And be the singing-masters of my soul.  
Consume my heart away ; sick with desire  
And fastened to a dying animal  
It knows not what it is ; and gather me  
Into the artifice of eternity.

### IV

Once out of nature I shall never take  
My bodily form from any natural thing,  
But such a form as Grecian goldsmiths make  
Of hammered gold and gold enamelling  
To keep a drowsy Emperor awake ;  
Or set upon a golden bough to sing  
To lords and ladies of Byzantium  
Of what is past, or passing, or to come.

W. B. YEATS

158. *Song from "A Full Moon in March"*

O, BUT I saw a solemn sight ;  
*Said the rambling, shambling travelling-man ;*  
Castle Dargan's ruin all lit,  
Lovely ladies dancing in it.

What though they danced ! Those days are gone,  
*Said the wicked, crooked, hawthorn tree ;*  
Lovely lady or gallant man  
Are blown cold dust or a bit of bone.

O, what is life but a mouthful of air ?  
*Said the rambling, shambling travelling-man ;*  
Yet all the lovely things that were  
Live, for I saw them dancing there.

Nobody knows what may befall,  
*Said the wicked, crooked, hawthorn tree.*  
I have stood so long by a gap in the wall  
Maybe I shall not die at all.

ANDREW YOUNG

159. *Late Autumn*

THE boy called to his team  
And with blue-glancing share  
Turned up the rape and turnip  
With yellow charlock to spare.

ANDREW YOUNG

The long lean thistles stood  
Like beggars ragged and blind,  
Half their white silken locks  
Blown away on the wind.

But I thought not once of winter  
Or summer that was past  
Till I saw that slant-legged robin  
With autumn on his chest.

160.

*The Stockdoves*

THEY rose up in a twinkling cloud  
And wheeled about and bowed  
To settle on the trees  
Perching like small clay images.

Then with a noise of sudden rain  
They clattered off again  
And over Ballard Down  
They circled like a flying town.

Though one could sooner blast a rock  
Than scatter that dense flock  
That through the winter weather  
Some iron rule has held together,

Yet in another month from now  
Love like a spark will blow  
Those birds the country over  
To drop in trees, lover by lover.



ANDREW YOUNG

161.

*Thistledown*

SILVER against blue sky  
These ghosts of day float by,  
Fitful, irregular,  
Each one a silk-haired star,  
Till from the wind's aid freed  
They settle on their seed.

Not by the famished light  
Of a moon-ridden night  
But by clear sunny hours  
Gaily these ghosts of flowers  
With rise and swirl and fall  
Dance to their burial.



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THE END



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